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DURING THE PAST WEEK we have been deluged, as is usual at this time of year, with cheerful descriptions of the prosperity which is to be ours in 1935. We have been told that while the past year was not extraordinary, a firm basis for advance has been laid, and that the corner will be definitely turned within the next twelve months. It may be bad taste to add a realistic touch at this season, but we are old-fashioned enough to believe that the New Year should be a period of stock-taking as well as a time for the exchange of felicitations. And if we are scrupulously honest, we must admit that in many respects the economic situation is more critical than it was a year ago. Unemployment, according to the latest available figures, is at least a half million greater than last year, while the number of persons on relief has increased by approximately five million. That the actual deficiency of resources in the hands of the underprivileged has grown even more than these figures indicate is shown by the fact that the cost of relief has more than doubled. Industrial production for the first ten months of 1934 was only 3 per cent above the very low figure for 1933. Department and chain-store sales have been running from 11 to 13 per cent over those of a year ago, but the gain in part reflects higher prices and in part the increased business done by these units as compared with the small dealer. On the other hand, a few persons will doubtless find grounds for cheer in the fact that dividend declarations by 675 companies in November were higher than for any month since February, 1932, and that for the first eleven months of 1934 they were more than $350,000,000 above the corresponding period of the previous year. We note also that the attendance at night clubs in the early hours of 1935 is said to have been greater than for many years despite prices of from $5 to $20 per person, and no doubt many of these people—for a time at least—believed that prosperity had indeed returned.

WE HOLD NO BRIEF FOR JAPAN, and find no justification for its denunciation of the Washington naval treaty. But no action taken by the Japanese in the past year has been more calculated to stir up animosity and bitterness than the recent statement by Admiral Reeves that the American fleet would hold its annual maneuvers this year off the cost of Japan. The fact that the announcement was timed, whether deliberately or otherwise, to coincide with Japan's denunciation of the Washington agreement only adds to its unfortunate effect. Inspired press accounts which describe the fleet as a "vast armada, the largest and most powerful by a wide margin ever assembled under a single command in the world's naval history" are not likely to soothe existing irritations. It would be scarcely less accurate to describe the maneuvers as a dress rehearsal for a war with Japan, which it most certainly is. As such they reveal quite clearly what the naval board of strategy conceives such a war to be like. There is no thought of defending American soil. The main body of the fleet is to be concentrated from 2,500 to 3,500 miles off the American coast, and is to be accompanied by four aircraft carriers with 477 airplanes, possessing an enormous cruising range. In other words, if the rehearsal is any indication, we are preparing for an offensive rather than a defensive war, a fact which the Japanese are not likely to be slow in discerning. We wonder if the American people as a whole realize the implications of this move, and if so whether they approve.

THE NEW YORK UTILITY FIGHT appears to have settled down to an endurance contest with both sides playing hard for public support. Not to be outdone by Mayor LaGuardia's flair for the dramatic, the Consolidated Gas Company, parent of a flock of smaller utilities, announced a reduction in the quarterly dividend payable March 15 from 50 to 25 cents. In making this announcement George B. Cortelyou, president of the company, referred piously to the corporation's obligation "not only to its customers and employees but also to 120,000 stockholders, of whom three-quarters own less than fifty shares each." Significantly enough, however, the action was not accompanied by a financial statement showing the company's earnings during the past year. Meanwhile, Commissioner Davidson, in cooperation with Washington officials, formulated definite plans for the erection of two municipal plants in Manhattan to meet the needs of the city and the federal government. Apparently

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convinced that New York meant business, the power trust countered with an offer to put into effect the "Washington" plan for rate reduction, whereby half of the excess profits of any one year would be applied to reducing charges in the following year. While this plan might ultimately bring considerable relief to the consumers, it can scarcely be said to be a solution to the problem. The companies would still doubtless insist on estimating their capital investment on the basis of their present highly inflated valuation, and they would probably ask for a return of 6 or 7 per cent, which is completely out of line with present-day capital earnings. In addition, they would demand half of all profits above that amount. Mayor LaGuardia has cogently termed the proposal "amusing." To accept a compromise at this juncture would be little short of treachery to the hundreds of thousands of voters who have looked to Fusion to drive racketeering and corruption out of high places.

ELSEWHERE IN THIS ISSUE we publish an article by Edith Abbott, well known in social work and in education, taking violent issue with the proposal, just made official, to take "unemployables" off federal relief and turn them back to the tender mercies—and slim pocket-books—of state and local agencies. This action will relieve the federal relief associations of the care of four million persons, or 20 per cent of the federal relief roll. Unemployables are defined by Harry L. Hopkins, Federal Relief Administrator, as "chronic dependents"—the aged, sick, crippled, widows, and the insane. (One must conclude that Mr. Hopkins means disabled widows, since there is evidently nothing inherent in widowhood which precludes gainful employment.) It is evident that to turn four million persons, however selected, back to local poor relief will strain beyond the breaking-point resources which are already hopelessly taxed. The federal government took over relief in large quantities when local and private agencies found the job too much to handle. What reason is there to suppose that today these agencies will be any more able financially to bear this burden or any better equipped for constructive maintenance and rehabilitation. Harold Ickes, in discussing, apropos of the government's new relief plans, the problem of subsistence homesteads, made a statement which is only too unfortunately descriptive of the entire program. Mr. Ickes said: "Like our other jobs, we begin it with no experience, no plan, and no goal."

THE PUBLISHERS let loose another flood of crocodile tears on the day the National Labor Relations Board requested the NRA to remove the Blue Eagle from the San Francisco *Call-Bulletin* for its failure to reinstate Dean Jennings. In a letter to the NRA which for sanctimonious hypocrisy has seldom been equaled even by former statements from the same source, the publishers, through Howard Davis, lament a situation which "may render the code invalid." In sad tones the letter recalls the sacrifices the publishers made in their desire to cooperate with the President by signing a code; in abused tones it charges the N. L. R. B. with attempting to annul the code by taking jurisdiction over the Jennings case instead of leaving it to the Newspaper Industrial Board (at this point it invokes Donald Richberg with much effect); in a magnificently simulated burst of ringing indignation it says, "We cannot allow the integrity of the instrument to be violated for any reason great or small"; and with a long-suffering air it asks that the NRA repel this "usurpation of power" "in order that the good faith of the government may be maintained and the code preserved." The whole statement is a tissue of misrepresentation. In the first place the publishers accepted the code only when they had assured themselves that it meant absolutely nothing; the idea that the N. L. R. B. was attempting to annul the newspaper code by ruling on the right of employees to organize is fantastic; as for what seems to be the most plausible contention of the publishers, that the case should have gone to the Newspaper Industrial Board, it is the most glaring misrepresentation of all. The fact is that this board was never designed to handle anything but disagreements on local wage scales between the printing-trades crafts and their employers, disagreements for the most part within the terms of already existing contracts.

THE INEFFECTIVENESS of the board in collective-bargaining cases is indicated by two recent developments. The first Newspaper Guild complaint to reach it involved the firing of an employee by an Italian newspaper, *Il Progresso*. The guild requested a vote on two issues: (1) Is the decision of the board final or may it be appealed? (2) Has the board the right to demand the financial records of a publisher who bases dismissal on the grounds of economy? The board split four to four on both questions. In the other case a typographical union charged that printers on the New Orleans *Item-Tribune* were coerced into a company union. The attorney for the union asked for a secret election. The board split on this question four to four. A publisher representative then offered a motion that the controversy be submitted to an impartial chairman. The vote resulted in another deadlock. It is not surprising that the union attorney at this point gave notice that he would present no more typographical cases to the board. Is it unfair to suspect that the publishers are invoking the Newspaper Industrial Board precisely because it *is* ineffective?

HEARST'S PERENNIAL RED-HUNT has gone into a new phase. His papers have recently undertaken what is obviously a systematic drive on liberal and radical teachers in colleges, universities, and even private schools. The story of the campaign to discredit members of the faculty at Syracuse University was told by Albert V. Fowler in the correspondence columns of *The Nation* of December 26. The same clumsy technique was followed at Columbia University, where Professor George S. Counts received a letter, presumably from two prospective students, inquiring whether the "real stuff about capitalism, socialism, and communism" could be obtained at Columbia and requesting an interview. It happens that Professor Counts is acquainted with both stool pigeons and yellow journalism; he had also heard of the Syracuse affair. The interview was granted but it was Professor Counts who made the scoop. The two young men not only made the damning confession, before a stenographer, that they were Hearst employees, but one of the inquiring reporters said in effect that he had written the letter under orders from the city desk. Having collected his evidence Professor Counts submitted it to the McCormack-Dickstein Committee Investigating un-American Activities with the request that it investigate William Randolph Hearst. Furthermore he took care to have the request signed

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by a list of famous names which are likely to get enough publicity to spoil Mr. Hearst's well-laid if badly hatched plans for a red scare, even though another all-American chanticleer, Matthew Woll, has taken his place beside Hearst and is crowing for an investigation of the colleges. For our part, the proposal to investigate Hearst appears to be one of the best suggestions made by any professor during the Roosevelt Administration.

PRESUMABLY THE LIBEL LAWS of this country are still in effect. Donald Richberg's letter to the editor of the *Saturday Evening Post,* therefore, advising him that the articles by General Hugh S. Johnson which Mr. Richberg "had been told" the *Post* would publish presently, would contain—or so Mr. Richberg had been informed—libelous statements about himself and that he would proceed accordingly, comes down to nothing more or less than a Big-Bad-Wolf threat to scare the *Post* into a more receptive and kindly attitude toward the Administration, and particularly toward Mr. Richberg. It is fair to assume that Mr. Lorimer, having been editor of the *Post* for some years, is fairly conversant with the legal responsibilities attendant upon his important position. One would guess that he had already submitted General Johnson's articles to counsel, and that if they contain statements which are considered to be actionable, he is fully aware of the fact and of the possible consequences. In any case, it would have been more seemly for Mr. Richberg to have relied upon something more than hearsay before making his threat. Being confronted with his letter in the press, Mr. Richberg stated that he did not understand how it had been made public, since he had not given it out. Mr. Lorimer declares that he did not give it out either. The whole matter must remain just another of those mysterious leaks in public—or is it private—affairs, unless one of the principals decides to clear it up. But what does plainly emerge is Mr. Richberg's determination, evidenced more than once lately, to wield the big stick in much the fashion of his colorful predecessor.

ALTHOUGH FRANCIS BIDDLE, chairman of the National Labor Relations Board, has his hands full at the moment, we wish he would look into the troubled anthracite situation bequeathed him by his predecessors. The strife between the United Mine Workers and the insurgent Anthracite Miners of Pennsylvania is unabated, and as has been pointed out in these columns, only a Labor Board election will bring peace. Within the past month several strikes have been called by the insurgents, and although the old-line union did its best to obstruct them, the men came out each time, indicating that the claims of strength made by the rebels are not imaginary. At the present writing the collieries of the Glen Alden Company in the Wilkes-Barre area, said to be the largest coal company in the world, are tied up in a general strike, with 8,000 men out and more joining them daily. Other plants have been crippled by walkouts. Yet the operators, most of whom have contracts with the United Mine Workers, steadfastly refuse to recognize the Anthracite Miners, despite *ipso facto* proof of their existence. The rebels for a time sought harmony, but their overtures were flatly turned down by the United Mine Workers officials, and the dissension has been renewed. The Anthracite Miners, their leaders say, are willing to disband if an employees' representation election fails to show them in a majority. It seems only fair to these thousands of workers who have turned away from the old union to give them their election.

LITTLE IS KNOWN of the repressive measures, amounting sometimes to terror, which are prevalent in Austria. The Black Book on the Austrian terror has presented the situation in general, but has given little idea of the position of women, of the mental pressure exerted by the clergy, or of the militarization of the children. As in other fascist countries, women have been driven from well-paid positions. The law requiring women teachers to remain unmarried has been extended to Vienna, which had long held out against it. Married women who had positions in the government were dismissed at once. The clerical-fascist regime in Austria is opposed to any development of women's intellect. Before the war there were no government middle schools for girls, only costly private schools. The Socialist government in Vienna, with neither time nor money to build girls' schools, turned the military-cadet academies into model schools of a high type, three for boys, three for girls. It also opened the boys' middle schools to girls, instituting coeducation. The clericals opposed this from the beginning, and in 1930, when the power of the Social Democratic school board of Vienna was already broken, succeeded in striking their first blow: girls were no longer allowed in the boys' classes, but girls' classes might exist in the boys' schools. In June, 1934, attendance of girls at the middle schools was prohibited altogether. At the same time one of the three model schools for girls was changed into an institution for military cadets. With the exception of the two remaining model schools, therefore, there are no government—that is, no cheap—middle schools for girls.

HERR SCHUSCHNIGG is copying Mussolini's Balilla and is fitting out the six-year-olds with uniforms and wooden guns. Under the name of Jung Vaterland they are being trained by their teachers in the schools. The pupils of the middle schools, however, with a thorough grounding from elementary school in the social-democratic doctrines of Glöckel-Fadrus, have put up a brave fight against "Fatherland" education. The administration has threatened wholesale expulsions, but without effect. In the Vienna schools, when pupils were asked to enrol voluntarily for Fatherland Front celebrations, it is reported that not a child did so. All possible repressive measures were then instituted—withdrawal of privileges, of free tuition, of bath cards—until finally the poorest children "voluntarily" took part. Herr Schuschnigg has not attempted to force these firm-hearted children into uniform. Gas-mask practice was attempted but the middle-school pupils made fun of it as a humbug. All of them refuse to wear the Fatherland badge, although threatened with rigorous punishments for their recalcitrance. After the February revolution membership in a so-called Fatherland Union was made the condition of employment, first in the government, then in private industry. One can only become a member of the union if one can show a Catholic certificate of baptism. Teachers who may be known to their pupils as Socialists and free-thinkers are obliged to revert at least officially to the Catholic faith in order to keep their jobs. In other words, Austria is in the grip of a tyranny as intolerant, although not quite so bloody, as is Germany.

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Democracy in Flux

THE brief reference in *The Nation's* Honor Roll for 1934 to Senator George W. Norris's achievement in winning the electorate of Nebraska to vote for the abolition of the bicameral Nebraska Legislature and the substitution of a single house could not for lack of space do justice to this significant development. This Senator, so often called "the noblest Roman of them all," is building one monument after another to himself. Four are now to his credit. He voted against the war, went home and told his people why, and was triumphantly reelected. By years of fighting, almost single-handed, he prevented the turning over of the great water power at Muscle Shoals to private interests. Next, by similarly arduous and unceasing labor, he convinced Congress of the necessity of amending the Constitution in order to abolish the "lame-duck" session of Congress and to set a new date for the convening of that body and for the inauguration of the President. Nobody took him seriously at first, but year after year he worked at this task until finally he wore away all opposition and this far-reaching reform was made part of our fundamental law. And now comes the revolution in Nebraska.

Here we have a remarkable record of accomplishment which gives the lie to those who say that under existing conditions no member of Congress can really achieve anything; that it is of no use to elect "good men." Senator Norris is one of the finest men in Washington; he is under obligations to no one and has always been in revolt against the machine; when he was last reelected to the Senate in 1930, the Republican organization, with Mr. Hoover—if one may judge by that great statesman's silence—conniving, ran an obscure grocer of similar name against him in order to deceive the electorate. Correspondingly the party machines are under no obligation to him. Hence he has won his victories by his steadfast and logical appeals for the proper course—he makes no pretense of being an orator. He has been aided, of course, by his shining character, his absolute trustworthiness; no one can ever doubt either his sincerity or his unselfishness. Thus a man who is apparently one of the least outstanding Senators, who rarely makes the first page of the press, has actually achieved vastly more than men like Senator Borah who forever bask in the public eye.

But we are less concerned today with Mr. Norris himself—deeply impressed as we are by his patriotic devotion and the extraordinary character of his achievements, which in the case of Muscle Shoals made the whole Tennessee Valley program possible—than with this additional proof that it is possible to make far-reaching changes in our democracy for the purpose of speeding up its processes and adapting them to our modern life. There never was any sound reason that the individual American states should have bicameral legislatures, except that the founders had the English precedent before them and that the colonial system of government perpetuated the idea that there were separate classes in the community which could only be adequately represented and protected if they had their separate legislative houses. As everyone knows who has studied for any length of time the working of a legislature like that of New York State, two houses do not make for prompt legislation, nor are they necessarily checks upon each other. Rather they aid under-cover agents, the lobbies, that control by privileged individuals and by corporations which is so largely responsible for our corrupt and inefficient state legislatures. Moreover, no one can give any sound reason why national political divisions should rule within the state legislatures—the Norris reform abolishes party designations on the ballot.

That our American democracy must modernize itself, speed up its machinery, and make itself more efficient is obvious. What could we not achieve if the Administration were to set itself at this task with the perseverance and the devotion of George W. Norris! By extending the merit system to all our civil offices Mr. Roosevelt could strike a body blow at political corruption and governmental inefficiency and end one of the unanswerable indictments of our democratic government. A reorganization of Congressional procedure is another need, one much discussed in Great Britain, where there is grave question whether the House of Commons is or will be able to deal with the ever-increasing economic problems thrust upon it without the creation of some additional expert machinery to aid in the drafting of bills. Mr. Roosevelt has shown us how Congress can be driven to unprecedented speed in a dire emergency; what we must work out is a continuously greater speed in normal times without, however, sacrificing intelligent and adequate consideration of measures. Again, we need the referendum and initiative urged by Woodrow Wilson and other leaders, and numerous other changes. Even former Representative James M. Beck, who views with disfavor so much of the New Deal, agrees that the time is at hand for planning a radical revision of our federal system, since he finds that the popular will is in the direction of greater and greater concentration of power in Washington.

Beyond doubt revision of the Constitution is indicated—and feared by most people, lest too radical and dangerous alterations be introduced and carried under stress of popular emotion or pressure. Meanwhile we have proof positive in the varied activities of the New Deal, as well as in Mr. Norris's remarkable record, that we do not have to stand still. There are many who still believe that in the next two years Mr. Roosevelt will enormously aid our democracy by carrying it along the road toward social and economic justice. But governmental changes must come, too, if the administrative machinery is to meet the requirements of the new order. Increasingly the federal government is assuming responsibilities—in public health, in education, in finance, even in the building of homes for our population—which demand not only imagination in conception but efficiency and clear-sightedness in administration. How ironical it would be to superimpose the old clumsy bureaucracy on schemes for the new day! We should not think of running a 1935-model, streamlined motor car with the engine used by Henry Ford in his famous first car. It just wouldn't go—and neither, under the same conditions, will the New Deal. The great pioneer, George Norris, has shown the way. Let those in high office take prompt heed.

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Need the New Deal Be Fascist?

THE business men who met at White Sulphur Springs to write a platform of cooperation with the government did not help either the President or themselves, but demonstrated once more the fateful want of business statesmanship in America. Under the stimulus of the profit motive an American Morgan can amass a fortune and a Henry Ford can even change a people's habits, but when it comes to working out a social program of national scope the vaunted American business genius is sterile. The platform which these ninety leaders sent to Washington, where it was not even personally presented to the President, was more tactful than the one adopted by the Congress of Industry in New York, but it was essentially the same Dead Sea fruit. Business really has no major solution beyond the familiar one of being left alone, the devil to take the hindmost. With no real alternatives it can only comment on what the government is doing. The ninety at White Sulphur Springs found gracious words at last for social insurance and the minimum wage, and they even revealed resignation to the dole, a welcome evidence that if these men are unable to lead they are at least able to change their minds. But the real value of their pronouncements is to show the country that constructive thinking is not in their line. Such statesmanship as we have is in Washington. Confused, contradictory, and pragmatic as the Administration has been, it still is superior to business both in imagination and in the sense of realities. The Administration has learned much in less than two years. It is shaking down to some of the real necessities of the country. But business has learned only how to say what it likes and what it does not like in the plans Washington is formulating.

What this inevitably means is that more and more the government must lead business, a prospect which frightens us as much as it does business men, though for different reasons. Professor Calvin Hoover, speaking at Chicago, compares the systems in the dictator lands of Germany, Italy, and Russia with the New Deal, and finds the chief difference to be that we are trying to retain political democracy. Professor William F. Ogburn, also seeing the coming union between business and the government, admits it will not save us from grave social disturbances. Once business and the government are united, unless the union is dedicated to the equal interest of all, it is fascism. "The nation may expect our government to control, regulate, or take over those economic functions which it becomes obvious cannot be left to manage themselves," says Professor Hoover. "In this respect the economic policy and the program of the New Deal somewhat resemble fascism and national socialism." What alone can save our system from becoming fascist is the realization of economic as well as political democracy, a truth which in one aspect the President falters in serving. Unless labor is given equal power with management in the new dispensation, ours will be fascism of the European brand. There is no escape from it. Yet the President continues to favor the idea of a watered-down collective bargaining, in the misconception that he is steering a middle course between the domination of big business and the domination of the American Federation of Labor. We confess our own dissatisfaction with the A. F. of L. as a wise and vigorous organization of American workers, but it will be far healthier to let labor grow to wisdom through responsibility than to render it impotent.

The President may not see that collective bargaining is vitiated by proportional representation. The coin, however democratic its ring, is counterfeit. The power in collective bargaining, however many phases of conciliation and arbitration it may go through, in the end is the strike. A committee made up of men some from an independent union, some from a company union, cannot wield this weapon effectively. Big business knows that proportional representation is the ideal ruse to maintain the dominant power of the employer. If the President really believes that labor equality must of necessity lead to labor domination, let him ask for a memorandum on the role of the trade unions in Great Britain. There they have grown to be a stabilizing and conservative influence. If the President is a gradualist, and believes we can only come to full-fledged collective bargaining after a transition period, he should realize that the transition period in America is already at hand; we are changing into a new society day by day. Once the decision is made that labor must remain inferior in the new order, the New Deal becomes still more fascist than Professor Hoover's description of it. But it is not too late to save the situation. Senator Wagner will introduce in Congress a bill defining still more clearly than his last bill the charter of labor, and sweeping aside the subterfuge of proportional representation. It is to be hoped that it is quickly passed. Should Congress have the least hesitation, it need only look at the fate of the parliament in Italy and the Reichstag in Germany to see what happens to free legislatures in countries where business and the government become one and labor is repressed.

Hitler and the Saar

SIX weeks ago the entire world looked with apprehension on the approach of January 13, the date of the Saar plebiscite. It was rumored that Hitler would attempt a putsch irrespective of the final vote, a step which must have led to a clash with the French army. Today, on the eve of the poll, there is little anxiety and even a certain amount of indifference as to the outcome. This alleviation of tension is the result of two developments, either of which seemed impossible a short while ago. First came the agreement signed at Rome on December 3, which provided a solution for the difficult problem of payment for the mines in the event of a German victory. This was made possible by France's unexpected generosity in assenting to partial payment in kind over a period of years. In return the Reich promised to extend the benefits of its social-insurance laws to all inhabitants of the Saar and to grant full immunity against reprisals, regardless of race or political belief, for the next twelve months.

Of even greater importance was the decision reached two days later by the League Council to send an international force—not to include French or German soldiers—to police the territory until after the vote should be completed.

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Prior to this it had been taken for granted that if any troops were required they would be sent by France. Great Britain had consistently opposed the use of its army on European soil, and without Britain no other country would have been invited to undertake the task. The sudden shift in the British attitude, together with France's unexpected willingness to remain in the background, has completely altered the outlook for the plebiscite. While the British, Italian, Dutch, and Swedish soldiers were received with ill-concealed hostility by the pro-Nazi German Front, the feeling is scarcely comparable to that which would have been aroused if French troops had been sent in; nor is there reason to doubt that the presence of the international force will prevent such disturbances as occur from growing completely out of hand, and act at least as a partial check on Nazi terrorism.

These factors, combined with the more settled state of affairs within the Reich, make a German victory almost a foregone conclusion. This does not mean, however, that the plebiscite will be without significance. Hitlerism remains the primary issue in the minds of a large number of the voters, and the poll will be as near to a free expression of opinion on Nazi political philosophy as we are likely to see in a German country. The bourgeoisie is united in the Nazi-controlled German Front, which is leading the fight for reunion with Germany, while the working-class parties are apparently equally determined in their opposition. Since the Communists and Socialists together polled 27 per cent of the total vote in the last election for the State Council of the Saar, and will be supported by at least a minority in the Catholic trade unions, the vote for continuing the status quo should be reasonably large. If so, it will be significant, for the voters are practically all Germans who desire to see the Saar reunited with the fatherland. A large poll against Germany, even though it is not more than 30 per cent of the total, will be a moral defeat for Hitler and should have some influence on German public opinion.

For economic reasons a German victory is likely to prove disadvantageous to the Saar. While under League control the Saar enjoyed the full benefits of a customs union with France, which has led to a marked industrial expansion. This arrangement had the dual advantage of giving the Saarlanders access to the Lorraine iron fields nearby and of allowing them to dispose of their product duty free either in France or in Germany. As a result the proportion of Saar coal absorbed by the Reich dropped from 59 per cent in 1913 to 17 per cent in 1925-30, while that marketed in France rose from 24 to 65 per cent. Similarly in the iron-and-steel industry the percentage of the output taken by France increased from 4 to 34 per cent. The reincorporation of the territory in Germany will bring the Saar into direct competition with the Ruhr, to the great disadvantage of both regions. On the other hand, there can be little doubt that a victory for Germany, followed by the restoration of the entire district to the Reich, will prove distinctly advantageous to Franco-German relations. Continuing the status quo would provide a constant source of irritation and friction to both countries and would only postpone the day of economic readjustment. Therefore while we may sympathize with the tens of thousands of Saarlanders who may involuntarily be placed under Nazi rule, it would seem that the best interests of the greatest number of people will be satisfied by abiding by the decision of the plebiscite.

Black Side of a White List

THE Legion of Decency, originally inspired by the Catholic church, goes merrily on its way with very little opposition from any quarter. The general attitude has been that the movies were pretty bad from almost any point of view and that the Catholic church might as well undertake the job of cleaning them up, since it would not, in all probability, be more unreasonable in its demands than any one of the always imminent censorships proposed by secular authorities. Moreover, the legion's activities so far tend on the whole to support this view, if one also assumes as a matter of course that a censor's business is to censor. Thus the list recently made up by the Chicago Council classes thirty-six films as "unobjectionable," twenty-nine as "for adults only," and thirty-six as "indecent." The fact that some on the "indecent" list appear to have been put there for doctrinal reasons rather than because they are equally offensive to non-Catholic *mores* will hardly attract much attention, and the general public may be likely to conclude that the Legion of Decency is moderate—at least as reforming organizations go.

We wonder, however, just how much of this apparent moderation is due to the desire to enter a wedge, and just how much disposition there will be to demand more as soon as what is now asked for has been granted. This may seem an unworthy suspicion, but it appears justified by the Catholic attitude toward the stage. As this is being written there are twenty-six plays current on Broadway, but—so we are assured by the *Catholic News*—the "approved list" has dwindled to three, and to a rather extraordinary three at that. The Catholic who wishes to be scrupulous has his choice to make from among the following: the Abbey Players, "The First Legion," and "The Great Waltz." Unfortunately for him, however, the second is a play far from warmly received by the critics, and the third is an overblown spectacle which may do nobody any harm but which is not likely to do anyone much good either. Certainly, it is no very liberal policy which, to take two random examples, cannot "approve" "The Farmer Takes a Wife" or "Gold Eagle Guy."

It is commonly argued that censorship movements are brought on by irresponsible producers of flagrantly indecent books and plays. We ourselves, on the contrary, have long had a suspicion that the natural-born censor is never satisfied, that he always rails against whatever seems to afford him the best opportunity for railing, and that so long as he has simple pornography to keep him happy he feels no necessity for finding offense where the ordinary citizen finds none. If this is true, then the "irresponsible" producer performs a certain function in drawing the fire, and the Legion of Decency is liberal in dealing with movies because it has sufficient banning to do without straining a point. An approved list of films contains such not too innocent-sounding titles as "Hell on Earth" and "Manhattan Love"; the list for adults only includes "Where Sinners Meet" and "The Private Life of Don Juan." Why should they be approved when all but three current plays are denied their *nihil obstat* unless the intention is to grow less tolerant with the films as time goes on?

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Issues and Men

A Reply to H. L. Mencken

AS one who was in favor of the repeal of the prohibition amendment to the Constitution, I cannot allow to pass unchallenged my friend H. L. Mencken's review of a year of legal liquor in *The Nation* of December 12. It seemed to me inaccurate, entirely one-sided, and an unfortunate playing down of the tremendous evils which have followed the reinstatement of the sale of liquor. As the Dallas, Texas, *Journal* has pointed out editorially, Mr. Mencken's article "is delightfully devoid of statistics—and correspondingly full of Menckenalia." He deliberately refrains from printing any of the figures as to increased drunkenness, so clearly evidenced in the alarming increase in drunken drivers of automobiles, in his effort to portray that all is well with the drinking world. Here are some of the facts which he carefully failed to print: The Travelers' Insurance Company of Hartford, Connecticut, reports a 16 per cent increase in automobile fatalities in the first ten months of 1934 as compared with a similar period for 1933, and declares that in the total number of drivers involved in automobile accidents there has been an increase of almost 24 per cent in the number who were intoxicated. As for the pedestrians involved in automobile accidents in 1934, the records show an increase of more than 55 per cent in those intoxicated.

If there is any reason to doubt the figures of the Travelers' Insurance Company, let us take those of the New York State Department of Correction, which on August 12 reported that arrests for intoxication in the state had increased since repeal no less than 23 per cent. The same report announced an increase of 2.7 per cent in the number of major crimes committed during that period. It would be, of course, absurd to say that this latter increase was solely due to the repeal of prohibition, but in view of the statistics cited above it is surely warrantable to attribute a fair proportion of them to increased intoxication. When the International Association of Chiefs of Police met in annual convention in Washington at the end of September, 1934, a large portion of their time was given to a discussion of the drunken driver. Dr. T. W. Kilmer, police surgeon of Hempstead, New York, produced figures showing how the number of drunken drivers who come into contact with the police has increased since repeal: New York 25 per cent, Massachusetts 37 per cent, District of Columbia 42 per cent, Rhode Island 100 per cent, Pennsylvania 77 per cent, Oregon 36 per cent. In cities the figures ran as follows: Philadelphia 300 per cent, Cincinnati 380 per cent, New Orleans 122 per cent, Los Angeles 24 per cent.

But let us turn to the general results of repeal over which Mr. Mencken gloats so enthusiastically. He declares that "the present supply of the latter [hard liquors] comes mainly from lawful distilleries, but there is still some bootlegging. . . ." That is certainly an extraordinary way of putting the facts. Joseph H. Choate, Jr., director of the Federal Alcohol Control Administration, has said: "Since the beginning of 1934 . . . the seizures [of illicit distilleries] have actually increased. In January 732, in February 582, and in March 674 were seized, a total for the quarter of 1,988." Many, he said, were large plants of the most modern description with stills tall enough to extend through three or four stories of well-equipped buildings, with the almost incredible capacity of 67,905,770 gallons. He declared that if this increase continued throughout 1934 there would have been seized 7,952 illicit plants with a combined annual capacity only about 12 per cent less than the legitimate total permitted by the alcohol administration. In other words, the bootlegging trade in liquor is today about equal to the legal. And this fact is what Mr. Mencken dismisses with the words, "but there is still some bootlegging." In passing, let it be pointed out for Mr. Mencken's attention that on December 8 the Coast Guard captured in New York harbor $330,000 worth of bootleg alcohol on one ship. Secretary Morgenthau does not share Mr. Mencken's easy optimism. He is reported to be organizing the greatest drive yet undertaken to suppress bootlegging—how many such have we had!

Again, Mr. Mencken says that repeal achieved the "destruction of both motives for excess" drinking, and so "the demand quickly settled down to parity with the actual national appetite, which turned out to be very moderate. How did it become so moderate? Here again it seems to me we may seek a cause in the effects of prohibition." Well, here is what the Chicago *Daily News,* which was never accused of being for prohibition, has to say about one year of repeal in Illinois:

> So far as a year's results may be judged from experience in Illinois, the enthusiasts for repeal were as much astray in their predictions as were the enthusiasts of prohibition. None of the promises have been fulfilled. The saloon is back, liquor is in politics, bootlegging continues, *drinking has increased,* unemployment is worse, the revenue returns to the state treasury are far below the hopeful estimates of 1933, and the cost of fighting the illicit traffic is still burdensome. From other states than Illinois similar conditions are reported.

So the national appetite is moderate? In New York City arrests involving drunkenness rose from 4,492 in the first ten months of 1933 to 5,357 in 1934 for the same period of the year. The New York State Motor Bureau reports that up to November, 1934, the licenses of 3,653 drivers had been revoked or suspended for driving when intoxicated, as contrasted with 3,008 during the entire year of 1933.

Dear Brother Mencken, the situation is alarming enough to cause national concern. The remedy is, of course, not to return to prohibition, but to work out a decent and sane system of rigid liquor control. That should have been done in every state before repeal.

Oswald Garrison Villard

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The Menace of Huey Long

I. The Kingfish in His Kingdom

By RAYMOND GRAM SWING

Baton Rouge, Louisiana, December, 1934

THE state legislature is in session for the fourth time this year. The summons went out Friday for a meeting Sunday night, December 16, which anywhere else would trumpet an emergency. Here it meant simply a new maneuver by Huey Long. More patronage is to be grabbed for the Long machine, though there isn't much left to grab. More Long enemies are to be punished. But the purpose of the session is also to create diversion. Seymour Weiss, unofficial treasurer of the Long organization, president of the Dock Board, and nationally known hotel man, was indicted on Thursday. The federal investigators who trapped Al Capone have dug up evidence for charges that Weiss evaded paying income tax on $176,972 in the years 1929-33. Everyone on Thursday was talking about Weiss, the second of the inner four of the Long machine to be tangled in the federal net. So far eight men have been involved in charges of evading the tax on more than a million dollars of income in the four years of Huey Long's rule. New Orleans was humming with gossip on Thursday. But by Friday night everyone was talking of the special session. As if to create a further diversion, Huey Long, United States Senator, clashed on Saturday with Captain "Biff" Jones, football coach at Louisiana State University. The Senator wanted to give his favorite football players a "pep" talk between halves of the Oregon game. The coach refused, exchanged hot words with the Senator, resigned. By Monday not only was the Weiss indictment off the front page; the Jones incident was outranking the special session in the newspapers.

The legislators meet Sunday night in the new $5,000,000 Huey Long Statehouse, a fine building with a thirty-story tower, which went up in a year. Everyone is happy, as though coming to a party. There is much hand-shaking and back-slapping. Only the insiders, back from a caucus in the governor's mansion, know what Huey Long is up to. These legislators are much like those in other states. Here and there is an outstanding fellow, but most are good-hearted, representative small-town citizens. One ten-gallon hat from an upstate parish (the Louisiana name for a county) is on parade. The lofty, overdecorated assembly hall of the lower house is noisy with the buzz of talk. The galleries are crowded. A few women sit in members' seats, but they are only wives, privileged on an opening session. (Huey, bitterly opposed by the society women of New Orleans, is no feminist. To my question, "How does he stand on feminism?" a close colleague replied: "He is perfectly normal on that. I never heard him discuss it.") The session begins; everyone stands in silence for a prayer, beseeching God's guidance during the work of serving the people of Louisiana. It is an earnest prayer; one feels for a moment that Huey's people actually believe they are there for public service. The prayer ended, roll call is taken by electricity; members press buttons on their desks, a light shines beside each name on a huge board behind the Speaker's dais. Then all is confusion again, as thirty-five bills are read by title into the microphone and resound through the hall over the din of a hundred conversations.

Huey Long is ubiquitous. Now at the Speaker's chair for whispered consultation, now on the floor, he speaks to this man and that, then in the aisles, laughing, shouting, gesticulating. His loud voice is easily heard over the din. He is in a boisterous humor. As United States Senator he has no business there, no official status. The technicality occurs to no one. Why should it? This is Huey's Statehouse, Huey's legislature, Huey's state, his and his alone. The business proceeds; Long answers a question from the floor, he grins and waves his arms, he struts and grimaces with eyes protruding, face flushed. He is like a young father on a romp in the nursery. Anyone can see how much fun it is being dictator. Six years ago a Louisiana legislature nearly impeached him. Now see where he is: he has more power in one state than ever a man in American history; he is stronger than a king. He revels in his triumph, and most of the members appear to enjoy it too. The last of the bills is read. Only a few members have risen to ask questions or to protest against the hurry. The opposition still does not know what is hidden in the bills; it wants them printed before the committee meeting in the morning. Huey halts in the aisles to promise he will see to it. The meeting adjourns, and the legislators rush out to the gala chocolate-marble lobby to continue their fraternizing.

Let us follow the course of the thirty-five bills in the Committee of Ways and Means, which met Monday morning at nine o'clock. This committee has seventeen members, fifteen of them Huey's, only two from the opposition. All house bills, whatever their contents, now go to this committee, which meets on the tenth floor of the Statehouse tower. Here, one would assume, the real work of legislation is done. Here bills should be studied, analyzed, modified. Here should emerge the conflicts of interest and principle later to be fought out in debates of the house, and subsequently carried to the state at election time.

At five minutes before nine Huey arrives noisily with his bodyguard. He looks well-groomed in a brown suit. But everything about this man is exaggerated; his voice is too loud, his color too flushed, his gestures too sweeping, his sudden moments of earnestness too fanatical, his commands too noisy. No man could well be more bereft of dignity.

"This is no way to run a legislature," he shouts on finding he is almost first on the scene. "Nine o'clock, and nobody here!" One of his bodyguard slips out; members begin scrambling in, taking their places around the committee table. Roll is called promptly at nine (and one thinks how Mussolini made the trains run on time). The night before, Huey dominated the legislature, but it still was managed by its own officials. This morning, without formality, he takes full charge. A United States Senator, he has no right before the committee unless invited to address it. But this is dictator-

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ship. Huey stands at the side of the chairman. "Before I explain these bills," he begins with unctuous humor, "I want to hear any comments by opponents." The bills had come from the printers just in time for the meeting, so the opponents had had no time to read them. The leading member of the opposition, a handsome young man of twenty-three, scowls and mutters a complaint. Huey grins. The chairman hands up Bill No. 1 and Huey glances over it.

"This bill," he begins conversationally, still reading, "is just a formality. The last legislature passed a liquor law—" He then tells in a few words what the bill provides. Someone whispers in his ear. "Oh yes, the bill also—" A member moves a favorable report, the gavel smashes down, the bill is approved. Huey is handed Bill No. 2, an income-tax measure. He explains it in a sentence; it is reported favorably. Bill No. 3 is a patronage grab giving the state machine the appointment of thirty employees in the tax collector's office in New Orleans. Huey again is solemnly humorous. "This is a very charitable law. It gives the gentlemen down in New Orleans the advantage of the best talent available. It relieves the heart of Mr. Montgomery [the tax collector] of a heavy burden."

"Has he requested the change?" speaks up twenty-three-year-old Representative Williamson.

"Not yet," says Huey; "we just anticipated that."

"Do you think he will like it?" asks Williamson.

"He will have to like it." The bill is approved at once. Three bills are out of the way in an elapsed time of six minutes. The same rate is maintained throughout. Huey stands there the entire time, the chairman's only function being to call for a vote, bring down his gavel, announce that the measure is approved, Representative Williamson and usually the second opposition member, voting no. Such questions as are raised are addressed to Huey and he answers them. One or two of the members interject remarks but Huey talks them into silence. He is running the show. Only one committee man makes a short speech, as by a special dispensation.

The object of much of the legislation is patronage grabbing. One bill takes from the city attorneys the right to name more than three assistants. New Orleans has ten. Hereafter this patronage goes to the Long machine through the Attorney General. Another bill transfers to the state the naming of all but five deputy sheriffs in any parish. Another requires all police and firemen to hold a warrant issued by the state. Huey promises that the state will not exercise discretionary power in issuing warrants, but the promise is not written into the bill. So the state gets control over every local police force and fire station after having taken over the appointment of police and fire chiefs in the last session.

The most important bill of the day provides for new schools of dentistry and pharmacy at Louisiana State University. Loyola University in New Orleans already has a dental college; Loyola also operates a radio station which did not give Huey all the time he wanted during the last campaign. Loyola will now feel the competition of a wealthy new dental school and Louisiana will have improved dental facilities. Instead of three free chairs in the Charity Hospital, there will be seventy-five. Huey, not mentioning the Loyola radio station, promises the committee that the new dental college will have the finest faculty in the world. It will enable young men to study dentistry at very low cost.

"How about the low cost to the taxpayers?" speaks up young Williamson.

"The little fellow won't feel it," Huey explains. "It will cost the corporations a little more, but we have to take care of the poor people. From those that have shall be taken away." Later a bill is approved which increases the tax on corporation franchises from $1.50 to $2 a thousand, the proceeds to be earmarked for the new colleges.

One bill is rejected during the sitting, not by the committee, but by the "visiting" Senator. The chairman hands it up to him, he looks at it, frowns. "We don't want this. Let them come to us." With this cryptic remark he hands the bill back. The committee is told no more, but it formally shelves the measure. There is a bill aimed to prevent companies with pension schemes from discharging an employee just before his pension is due, requiring them to pay a proportion of the pension in such cases. Huey refers to a company within view of the committee window. (The Standard Oil Company refinery is smoking out there. Huey has fought Standard Oil all his political life.) Young Williamson remarks that the bill may lead all companies to abandon their pension schemes.

"Whoever goes out of the pension system because of this law just admits he is a crook," says Huey. The bill is approved. Once Huey finds the draft of a measure defective and scribbles an amendment himself, leaning over the table, writing rapidly on a large sheet of yellow paper while the committee waits. But even this delay does not spoil the record; thirty-five bills are acted on in seventy minutes, thirty-four approved, one shelved. This was the pace at the last session, and no doubt will be the pace so long as Huey's machine holds together. Two minutes for a law; this is dictatorship.

America has never seen anything more brazen or more slick. It is an object-lesson in the ease with which the form of democratic government can be twisted to serve the reality of one-man rule. The legislature meets, it pretends to initiate and enact laws, to scrutinize and debate them, and yet the operation has no more merit than it would have if these men moved in hypnosis.

What happens in the later sessions is that Huey makes further inroads into the broken lines of his opponents. By a ruse he gains control over the appointment of school teachers. He takes powers to remove the elected Mayor of Alexandra, the one town which had the temerity to shower him with eggs when he spoke there in the last campaign. The parish of Baton Rouge, which he did not capture at the polls, is subdued by a law which gives the state control of the "police jury," or local-government board, through the appointment of extra members. Huey explains he will make the parish into a District of Columbia, to safeguard the vast wealth of the state there situated. Standard Oil is at last subjected to an "occupational" tax for refining oil. The principle is resented by all business men and during Long's four years as Governor they kept him from applying this tax. Now it is slipped in unheralded and cannot be blocked. It will cost Standard Oil a million a year. Nor is this the end; there is talk of a further session in January, and beyond that of a new constitutional assembly to rewrite the basic law of the state to suit Huey's purposes.

To witness such a session is an almost unbelievable experience. It bristles with elements hard to comprehend.

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Why do these committee members take it lying down? This legislature is composed of men who are most of them ordinary, nice human fellows. How can they stomach Huey Long? How can they put up with his bullying, his unsavory, blasphemous, overbearing language? They do not seem to be afraid of him; they appear to like him. Psychology explains the dictators of Europe as appealing to the innate yearning for father-authority in most people. But Huey Long is no father-figure. He is a grown-up bad boy.

Here is the way Huey's most plausible interpreter justifies the dictatorship. The speaker is the Reverend Gerald L. K. Smith, who is in charge of the "Share Our Wealth" movement, through which Huey aspires to national leadership. "It is the dictatorship of the surgical theater," he explains. "The surgeon is recognized as being in charge because he knows. Everyone defers to him for that reason only. The nurses and assistants do what he tells them, asking no questions. They jump at his commands. They are not servile, they believe in the surgeon. They realize he is working for the welfare of the patient."

"But the patronage grabbing?"

"Frankly, I believe in the spoils system. You have to have power before you can serve the people effectively. Senator Norris says you mustn't sacrifice any of your principles. Huey Long believes you have to yield on a lesser principle to serve a greater one."

That brings one back to the old, old argument about the end justifying the means. But it also raises a vital question. Is Huey Long a "surgeon" who "knows"? Is the surgeon concept worth taking seriously? It is, for if Huey realizes his ambition and campaigns throughout the United States for the Presidency, he will be asking for the surgeon's dictatorship. He will seek the support of the masses on the plea of doing for them what he has done for the masses in Louisiana. He will want all the "nurses" and "assistants" in the Capitol at Washington to jump at his command, as they now do in Baton Rouge. "Now this is a bill—" he will wish to explain to the Committee of Ways and Means, and he will expect the chairman to smash down his gavel and record its approval, with no more questions than a nurse voices in the operating room. This is the way Huey Long works. It is the only way he can work. He is not a fascist, with a philosophy of the state and its function in expressing the individual. He is plain dictator. He rules, and opponents had better stay out of his way. He punishes all who thwart him with grim, relentless, efficient vengeance.

But to say this does not make him wholly intelligible. One does not understand the problem of Huey Long or measure the menace he represents to American democracy until one admits that he has done a vast amount of good for Louisiana. He has this to justify all that is corrupt and peremptory in his methods. He really has been a remarkably competent surgeon. Taken all in all, I do not know any man who has accomplished so much that I approve of in one state in four years, at the same time that he has done so much that I dislike. It is a thoroughly perplexing, paradoxical record.

If he were to die today, and the fear and hatred of him died too, and an honest group of politicians came into control of Louisiana, they would find a great deal to thank Huey Long for. He has reshaped the organism of an archaic state government, centralized it, made it easy to operate efficiently. Most important of all, he has shifted the weight of taxation from the poor, who were crippled under it, to the shoulders that can bear it. He has increased the debt of the state from $11,000,000 to nearly $150,000,000, the second largest per capita debt in the Union. But each stage of debt increase has been financed with new taxation. While the state has benefited from most of the money spent and its credit has been maintained at a high level, he has relieved the poor from many taxes and arranged for an early exemption of all property of $2,000 or under. This means that most Negroes in Louisiana and more than half the whites will be tax free, save for what they pay in taxes on tobacco, liquor, and gasoline. Further, his law postponing the payment of debts, though its effectiveness in practice still is to be demonstrated, makes him appear as the debtor's savior. He has laid out a system of highways and bridges that will lift Louisiana out of the backwoods tradition and make it coherent and accessible. Since 1924 two thousand miles of concrete roads, eleven hundred of asphalt, and thirty-seven hundred of gravel have been built, according to A. P. Tugwell, chairman of the State Highway Commission. Then, surprisingly, he has devoted himself to the cause of education. He has remodeled the school system of the state. His legislation has made it possible for a full eight-month term to be maintained in the poorest parishes. The burden of school attendance has been lightened by the state's providing all textbooks free of charge, a measure which has added around 15,000 to school attendance. (This is not to deny that school classes are far too large, or to condone dragging the schools into politics.) His enthusiasm for Louisiana State University, say his enemies, is the result of a feud with Tulane University, just as the new dental school is described as a punishment for Loyola. Leaving that aside, Louisiana State now is a flourishing, wealthy institution, with a first-rate faculty, doing work which marks it Grade A among the universities of the country. It has 4,000 students, as against 1,500 when Huey became Governor. Its equipment is superb, and it is taking a leading place in education in the South. Huey added a medical college to the university; the building was begun in January, was opened in October, the faculty was assembled, and the following May it won the grade of A among medical schools. Moreover, Tulane itself is improving its work in the face of this competition.

In the first year of his term as Governor, Huey put his shoulder behind the campaign to stamp out illiteracy. Louisiana was near the bottom of America's disgrace list. The late Julius Rosenwald, who paid out $50,000 for this campaign, deserves much of the credit. More than 100,000 adults, white and black, learned to read and write in a single year. (The work is now proceeding under the federal relief authorities.) Huey has fought the public-utility companies during his whole political career and has won important victories. Power and telephone rates have been reduced, and will be reduced further if he has his way. He is now fighting to lower electricity rates in New Orleans, the highest in the country for a city of its class. It must be recorded that his brother, testifying before the Senate committee investigating the Overman election, denied the sincerity of Huey's fight against the corporations, and this denial is vigorously supported by his enemies in Louisiana. But I am not attempting now to judge his motives, but rather to summarize his achievements as they appear to the majority in the state

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who support him. Even the $5,000,000 Statehouse, about which so much that is derogatory has been said, would be considered a boon without Huey and his henchmen in it. Most of it is in good taste, all of it is useful, and rearing its lofty tower beside the Mississippi it symbolizes the strength and even the dignity of a modern commonwealth. Behind Huey's record is not the enunciated social philosophy to be found, say, in Wisconsin, but he has lifted Louisiana from a backward position to one that in many respects is advanced. I have said that until this is appreciated, the menace he represents to democracy in America cannot be measured. The man has good works to offer in return for his dictatorship. One needs only to think a moment to realize that without the good works he would be no menace whatever.

[*A second article on Huey Long by Mr. Swing will appear next week, and a third the week following.*]

Taxation in the New Social State

VIII. European Finance in the World Crisis

By GERHARD COLM

IT has been estimated that before the depression taxes took from 20 to 25 per cent of the national income in the great European countries and only from 10 to 12 per cent in the United States. In Europe the World War left a deeper imprint on financial and economic conditions than it did in the United States, and even before the war most European governments supported a much larger group of social and economic functions than did government in this country. In comparing the public-finance policies of European countries with those of the United States one must also consider the greater natural resources of the United States, and hence the greater objective tax resources. Together these differences result in a much greater tax burden, relative to the national income, in Europe than here.

Because of the higher tax burden certain problems arose earlier and became more urgent in European countries—problems which can reasonably be expected to arise or become increasingly urgent in the United States if the share of public finance in the national economy continues to grow as it has grown in the last few decades. One lesson learned by Europe from the crisis may be touched upon here. European states in general experienced a steady increase in functions without any realization of the consequences of this process. Both in the conflict of philosophies and in social science the two extremes were dealt with predominantly—a laissez faire economy with a minimum of state activity, and a socialistic economy with a comprehensive state organization. For the middle course of a profit economy with important and growing public functions, both the philosophy and the technique were lacking. To be sure there existed in Germany as well as in England certain beginnings of a theory of "interventionism"; but they remained incipient, without extensive strength or influence. Many blunders, uncertainties, and half measures were traceable to this deficiency. Herein lies the first and most common failing of European financial policy from which a lesson may be drawn. A greater share of public finance in the national economy is not necessarily a reason for economic disturbances. The generalization does not hold that the countries with the highest relative tax burdens are necessarily plunged first and most deeply into the crisis. But there can be no doubt that the inconstancy of financial policy has been one reason for the failure to overcome the world depression.

Budgetary deficits are a general phenomenon of the present depression. Dalton writes, in his introduction to the study "Unbalanced Budgets," that in 1932 of thirty states surveyed only three had balanced budgets. The question is whether the use of idle credit reserves to cover these deficits contributes toward recovery, or whether recovery depends on first balancing the budget. Great Britain is often pointed out as the first and until now the only country to balance its budget and simultaneously to find its way out of the depths of depression. What is more natural than to assume that balancing the budget is the cause of recovery? What is more natural than to advise other countries to follow the British example? But this very example illustrates how difficult it is to interpret the experiences of one country in terms of another. The balancing of Britain's budget was possible chiefly for the following reasons: The country had been for a decade in a depression with a relatively large number of unemployed. Its budget carried grants for an unemployment-insurance system which paid a fairly high dole. With the increase in the number of unemployed during the world depression the rate of the dole was reduced, and therefore the total burden increased less than it did in countries which set up relief systems for the first time. Reduction in the relatively high government salaries was a further means of retrenchment. Similarly, the conversion of the public debt could have a greater influence on British expenditures than on those of other countries because of the proportionately greater importance of debt service in the British budget. Finally, the new tariffs opened up a source of revenue of considerable importance. The deflationary effect of this policy of economy was partly offset by an increasing real purchasing power of wages, which did not fall as fast as prices. It may be said that from the point of view of international competition the devaluation of the pound had the same effect as a reduction of wages. Despite the increasing number of unemployed the real purchasing power of labor rose, according to the *Economist*, about 5 per cent from 1929 to 1933, while in the United States, according to the calculation of the national income made by Dr. Simon Kuznets, a decline of about 25 per cent occurred from 1929 to 1932. The fact that the

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British government did not need to resort to credit in 1933 effected a further reduction in the interest rate and eased the resumption of private investment. But the reduction of the interest rate did not have the same effect in other countries, where tremendous credit reserves remained idle. The conservative financial policy alone cannot explain the recovery. Much more decisive was the fact that there existed in England a latent need for investment. British industry was organized to a great extent for foreign trade, yet many manufactured products were being imported into England even though they could have been produced at home. After the loss of important foreign markets England had no choice but to turn her production increasingly toward the home market, and she furthered this process of reorientation by means of tariffs and other governmental measures. This transformation stimulated investment in new plants and also created demand for new housing, since it involved a certain amount of geographical redistribution of population. Thus England experienced a recovery through reconstruction which arose from her peculiar situation and which cannot be duplicated in other countries.

Other examples indicate that a deflationary policy is not in itself sufficient to overcome depression. They indicate also that such a policy cannot even achieve the result of balancing the budget if conditions are different from those in England. In France the policy of governmental economy succeeded in diminishing the deficit but did not balance the budget. Economic conditions did not improve in spite of not unfavorable general conditions. Another example of deflationary policy occurred in the German republic under Brüning. Brüning made heroic efforts to balance the budget, chiefly through radical retrenchment of expenditures but also through a considerable increase in tax rates and the imposition of new taxes. But these attempts were rendered futile by the deepening depression, which led to new increases in relief expenditures and subsidies, and to decreasing tax revenues. And yet this policy of Brüning's, which involved so many sacrifices, was not entirely fruitless. Brüning himself had in mind, I suppose, to turn, after the period of radical retrenchment and after the definite settlement of the reparations question, to a policy of pulic works and credit expansion. To a certain extent, and not without a degree of success, such a program was later carried out by the National Socialist regime, which was thus able to realize the advantage of Brüning's earlier and thankless efforts. In view of the special situation of Germany's foreign trade and international credit, a policy of public works and credit expansion would have been quite impossible without previous or at least simultaneous reduction of costs. Italy's financial policy during the crisis also combined a tendency toward reduction of expenditures and costs of production with a policy of public works. Sweden followed, with a fair measure of success, a policy of modest expansion and carried a temporary budget deficit. We may therefore conclude from the experiences of Europe that a drastic attempt to balance the budget is not sufficient in itself to overcome the depression if business is not in a position to make use of large capital outlays. Recovery occurred simultaneously with a policy of budget balancing only where, as in England, large investments were made necessary by a transformation of the basis of production. Moreover, other countries achieved a certain degree of recovery without first balancing their budgets.

If we examine in detail the measures taken by European countries to balance their budgets, we find that, despite the larger appropriations for relief and other social purposes made necessary by the depression, the governments were more successful in decreasing expenditures than in increasing tax revenues. Economies were effected partly by the adjustment of governmental purchases and salaries to the lower price level, and partly by a curtailment of appropriations for social and cultural institutions. Reactionary forces frequently used the depression as an excuse for disposing of governmental activities which seemed undesirable to them. In nearly all countries normal expenditures for public building and repairs were drastically reduced. Public works only partly compensated for these reductions. Expenditures for armaments in most European countries did not fall in proportion to other administrative expenditures; in some countries they were even increased. In many cases the policy of public expenditures appears to fluctuate planlessly between drastic curtailment and uncontrolled expansion. Nowhere is the necessity for long-range planning more strikingly revealed than in this field.

In their efforts to increase tax revenues European countries did not discover remarkable new tax sources. Many non-European countries, in South America for example, were able to impose income taxes for the first time. In the United States liquor taxes and state sales taxes constituted important new tax sources which had already been used in most European countries before the depression began. The argument that taxation has passed the limits of productivity is often overstressed in the current depression, as Dalton points out in the work cited above. Nevertheless, it is a fact that in some European countries the income tax has reached at least its psychological limits. The German states and municipalities imposed many new taxes which fell most heavily on the lower and middle income groups. Even a kind of municipal poll tax was levied, less with the intention of increasing revenues than of interesting the masses in a policy of economy. Of particular interest is the imposition in Sweden of a heavy inheritance tax, the yield of which is to be used for the retirement of loans for public works.

In nearly all European countries a striking change in the tax structure took place during the depression. The proportion of income and property taxes in the total tax receipts was sharply reduced. A survey made by the League of Nations (World Economic Survey, 1933-34) which compared the tax receipts of the year 1929 with the estimated revenues for 1934 illustrates this tendency clearly. In general, the importance of excise and sales taxes, and in some countries of customs duties, has increased. (For nearly a century it has been the opinion of progressives that the relative importance of the income tax should be increased. Has the income tax, the ideal tax from the point of view of social justice, passed the peak of its development?) To a certain extent this tendency may be a temporary result of the fact that the income tax is levied on the income of the preceding year and is therefore more under the influence of the depths of the crisis than sales taxes, customs duties, and the like, which reflect more immediately the influence of recovery. Yet this phenomenon is more than merely temporary. It is not by chance that the relative importance of income and property taxes could be increased during the depression only in those countries, such as Hungary, Spain, and several South American countries,

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which did not have fully developed tax systems. In most European countries, with the exception of England, income taxation could be extended only by increasing the burden on lower and middle income groups, thereby reducing the social value of the income tax. The broad field of business taxation is capable of further development. But such taxes have not been studied scientifically and developed technically to the same extent as the income tax.

Finally, another aspect of Europe's experiences during the crisis may be profitably considered. With increasing financial burdens the problem of coordinating the various agencies assumes increasing urgency. Many European states in the last decades delegated certain of their functions, such as social insurance, to autonomous or semi-governmental bodies. Though this policy had certain administrative and political advantages, it became impossible to continue the fiscal autonomy of these bodies during the depression, when they ceased to be self-supporting or to meet even their minimum expenditures. Unemployment-insurance systems, for example, ceased to possess the feature of "insurance" in the technical sense of the term. Even states and municipalities lost their financial autonomy. As a consequence of the war and post-war exigencies, state and local governments had lost to the national government many of their taxing powers. The result was that these governments were in no position to meet the new demands which were placed upon them by the depression. It was impractical to attempt to restore their former taxing powers. The most reasonable alternative was further to centralize the taxing powers and responsibilities in the national government, in the interest of increased efficiency, and to continue the elimination of double taxation and equalization of tax resources as between wealthy and poor districts. The most extensive reforms along these lines have occurred in Great Britain and Germany.

Germany has been working toward a single system of public finance, in which the central authority exercises a controlling influence. The local units are required to fulfil a prescribed minimum of public functions. They can maintain services in excess of this minimum at their own discretion, but only up to a certain maximum regulated by law. Certain taxes are reserved for local uses, but in many cases these are administered by the central government. Other local revenues are derived from state aid. Formerly these were distributed chiefly according to the local contribution to the national tax revenues. Recently the basis of this distribution has been modified to that of the relative needs of the different districts. By such reforms the financial operations of central and local governments have been coordinated.

It is evident from this review of the European experience that with a rising level of taxation and increasing influence of public finance on business activity it becomes imperative for a country to coordinate and unify the financial operations of its various governmental units. We may expect during the next few years increasing activity along these lines in the United States, and the development here of a plan of coordination that will meet the peculiar needs of this country.

[*This is the eighth of a series of ten articles on taxation, planned and edited by Professor Paul Studenski. The ninth, on Public Finance in Time of War, by Hugh Dalton of the London School of Economics, will appear in an early issue.*]

Don't Do It, Mr. Hopkins!

By EDITH ABBOTT

THE Washington announcements that a new employment or work-relief program is to be initiated on a much more adequate scale than even the CWA is good news to all who understand the unmerited sufferings of the unemployed and their eagerness for work. Newspapers continue to carry new and revised versions of the story which many state relief administrators already know by heart—that when the Federal Relief Administrator launches his great work-corporation, or whatever he decides to call it, the new system will provide "work for the employable," and as for the so-called "unemployables," well, they are to "go back to the states."

Back to the states, Mr. Hopkins? Back to the local authorities that have no facilities and no funds for taking care of these people? For going back to the states really means going back to the counties and back to the townships; and back to the inefficiency, incompetency, and inadequacy of the system of poor relief supported by local property taxes.

Greatly respected citizens apparently have some mysterious faith in the supposed virtue of local taxes and local administration. The liberal and generous-spirited President of the United States still speaks almost devoutly of the importance of the local communities "doing their part"—as if they had adequate funds and leadership for a social-welfare program. There is, of course, an influential body of public opinion that, for unexplained reasons, desires and expects a prompt return to the old, local, poor-law system. For example, Newton D. Baker, distinguished both as a statesman and a philanthropist, has recently pointed out the supposed dangers of federal relief and the supposed virtues of the local administration of all poor relief, and has announced his "eager hope that soon the entire burden of relief may be returned to local shoulders." But all who have recognized the miserable incompetence of the old system know that returning to the local relief authorities means returning to everything that is reactionary in the field of social welfare. It means going back to the old system of political county boards and township trustees, back to the "poor masters," "overseers of the poor," "poor boards," and other antiquated relief administrations.

There are 3,072 counties in this country, but there are many more local poor-relief authorities than there are counties. A recent Ohio report showed that in that state, for example, where there are only 88 counties, there are 1,337 townships and 110 cities, a total of 1,535 local governments, all with a statutory responsibility for some form of relief to persons outside of institutions. And if a count is made of the officials responsible for administration under

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the state poor law and under the various special laws concerned with public aid, "there are approximately 6,000 public officials responsible for the administration of some form of outdoor relief" in Ohio. They are, for the moment of course, inactive, and their work is now being carried on by the FERA with a better understanding of human needs. How many different statutory poor-relief authorities and officials there are in the whole country no one knows.

Public calamities like the great depression and the great drought were apparently needed to expose the weakness and the incompetence of the outworn local relief system. As a result of these calamities, emergency poor-relief legislation, creating new central poor-relief authorities, federal and state, has been hastily enacted in the last few years by Congress and by the state legislatures, to supplement the antiquated poor-law machinery of the states. These new emergency laws that have been passed since the autumn of 1931 have temporarily revolutionized the old system by removing the primary responsibility for relief from the minor local authorities. But, unfortunately, these new central authorities have been created only for temporary purposes and are generally described in the statutes as "emergency" commissions or administrations.

In a fine decision (*Ach* v. *Braden,* 125 Ohio State 307), the Ohio Supreme Court recently quoted the ancient maxim of the law "Salus populi suprema lex est," and accepted the theory that the emergency poor-relief act was an exercise of the police power for promoting the common welfare, for "the alleviation of human suffering, the prevention of want, by aiding the poor in their distress." The court said that the state, like "the Good Samaritan of old, had extended a helpful hand to those of its people who through no fault of their own had become destitute and needful of the necessaries of life." And in an emergency the superseding of the local authorities by the state was justified. But only for the emergency! What then? In Ohio the old poor laws "are still in force, and the principles which have characterized the legislation in this area since 1790" remain substantially unaltered in the emergency.

One of the most exigent questions of the day is how to construct a modern system of public assistance on the old poor-law foundations. For there is much that is valuable in the fundamental principle on which the old poor law rests. The basic principle of these statutes, accepted in America since colonial days, is that the state accepts the responsibility for the maintenance of all its citizens who are unable to maintain themselves on the accepted minimum standard of living. However inadequate the administrative machinery has been, the basic principle of public responsibility remains as sound in the twentieth century as it has been in the preceding three centuries of its history. But there is abundant evidence of the need of reorganization, revision, and codification of the state laws dealing with public aid. The trend of the last century has been away from local responsibility toward public aid from the state administrations. More than a century ago this movement began with the removal of the indigent insane from local poorhouses and jails, from local jurisdiction and local responsibility, to state hospitals supported by state funds. More recently the newer forms of public assistance, such as mothers' aid and old-age pensions, have not infrequently recognized the principle of state aid as distinguished from local responsibility. These new forms of public assistance have usually been set up outside of the poor law, while the old laws have remained substantially unchanged. The principles of local responsibility, of "settlement" or a long period of residence as a basis for eligibility, and of the legal responsibility of members of the family for the maintenance of certain relatives have been substantially unchanged since the English poor laws of the seventeenth century were brought to this country by our earliest colonists.

In the last eighteen months the President and Mr. Hopkins have made a notable beginning in applying the principles of federal aid to the social-welfare system. The FERA has had far-reaching influence on the development of the new welfare programs in parts of the country where there has never been any social work before. Competent "emergency relief" organizations, with state directors, regional and district supervisors, and county social-work units, have been set up in areas where social-work standards had heretofore barely existed. But if Mr. Hopkins turns everything but a work program "back to the states," federal supervision and federal control will go. More than that, state supervision and state control will also go, and the discredited local authorities will be promptly restored. Local politicians, temporarily banished by the resolute orders of the Federal Relief Administrator, will return to welfare control.

Instead of "turning the unemployables back to the states," will not the Federal Relief Administrator take a position of leadership in demanding that the states abolish their old pauper laws and set up a new American system of public assistance? The disgraceful and un-American word "pauper," which still appears as the title of the Illinois poor law, is also used in twenty-nine other states as the legal title of the statute making provision for public aid, in the section heads, or in the text of the statute. That these are really "pauper laws" in spirit as well as in terminology was sharply brought home to many people during the campaign of 1932 and again this last fall when an effort was made in certain communities to enforce the old pauper disqualification for the franchise. The old system will die hard, and few states will be able to make any substantial progress in the abolition of the pauper laws without Administration pressure. All the petty officials drawing petty salaries for the incompetent "pauper law" administration of which they are a part will welcome help from Washington that will seem to restore the old system.

Has not the time come when the Federal Relief Administrator can announce a plan or policy that will assure the setting up of a permanent Federal Welfare Department with continued federal aid not only for old-age pensions, unemployment compensation, and mothers' pensions but also for general home relief? If the federal government, in its zeal for the more popular forms of economic security, withdraws from the relief program, and if the pressure of the federal government for adequate standards of care is removed, the states will lose no time in returning the statutory local responsibility for relief to the statutory but incompetent local governments. Only by continuing federal aid for human welfare, as well as for roads and agricultural experiments, can the old degrading and disgraceful system of local relief be brought to an end. Will not Mr. Hopkins set us free from our un-American American poor laws, instead of returning to them the so-called "unemployables" and their families?

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Gold Bricks for the Aged

By M. B. SCHNAPPER

BACKED by a high-powered propaganda machine which is capitalizing the desperate hopes of elderly men and women, the Townsend plan proposing a pension of $200 a month for all persons over sixty is sweeping the country. Playing up President Roosevelt's promise of pension legislation to their own advantage, the sponsors of the Townsend plan are leading elderly people to believe that the scheme has the indorsement of the Chief Executive himself. And the plan is exploiting not only the dreams and the patriotism of the aged, but their pocket-books as well; for each of the reputed four million Townsend adherents is paying hard-earned cash for Townsend pie in the sky. There are millions of possible dollars and adherents among the ten million persons in the United States above the age of sixty.

The Townsend scheme—strictly speaking, the Townsend Old Age Revolving Pension Plan—is promoted by a group of organizations using the same address in Long Beach, California, and calling themselves Old Age Revolving Pensions, Ltd., Old Age Revolving Pensions, Inc., the Prosperity Publishing Company, and the Modern Crusader. While California was the birthplace and is the center of activity, local Townsend clubs have been formed in all parts of the country.

Economically absurd, the Townsend scheme is yet simplicity itself. Each man or woman reaching the age of sixty —who doesn't happen to be a habitual criminal—will be entitled to receive from the federal government a check for $200 on the first of each month. The only conditions are that the recipient shall not work or engage in any other money-making activities, and that he spend the entire $200 within the month. The Townsend prestidigitators propose to finance the scheme through a 10 per cent retail sales tax. If such a tax seems high, Dr. Townsend is quick to assure you that it is really going to be a blessing in disguise, because the $200 a month will create an enormous demand for goods. While prices will rise, profits and wages will also increase. In short, Hoover prosperity days may turn out to have been a depression compared with the Townsend era.

It would be difficult not to treat the Townsend plan as a joke if it were not such a serious matter for so many. Its economics are so absurd that it should hardly be necessary to analyze them, to compare them with the facts, but let us do just that. The Census of 1930 showed that there were in that year 10,350,000 persons in the United States who were sixty years of age and over; at present there are slightly more in this older age group. In some of the Townsend literature it is claimed that ten million persons would be pensioned and that two billion dollars a month would be paid out in pensions. In other publications the number expected to be pensioned is placed at eight million, which would reduce the pensions to $1,600,000,000 per month. Expressed as an annual figure, the total cost of the pensions is thus between $19,200,000,000 and $24,000,000,000. Either figure is more than double the total disbursement of the federal government last year, including all loans, and ten times the present relief costs. Either one approaches one-half the total present income of all of the people of the United States and one-fourth of the entire national income in the best year we ever had. (According to the estimates of the United States Department of Commerce the total gross income produced last year was less than forty billions and in 1929, the best year, less than eighty-three billions.) People who are sixty and over constitute less than 9 per cent of all the people of the United States, but at present income levels they would under the Townsend plan receive more than half of the entire national income.

Neither a 10 per cent retail sales tax nor a 10 per cent tax on all money transactions would yield anywhere near the amount required to finance the old-age pensions under the Townsend plan. The total retail sales in the United States—including food, clothing, and all other necessities, without any exemptions—amounted to $31,500,000,000 in 1932, and to $49,115,000,000 in 1929, the largest total we have ever had. A 10 per cent additional tax on all retail sales would thus produce only from three to five billions a year, while the Townsend pensions would require from nineteen to twenty-four billions. A 10 per cent tax on all money transactions would produce a great deal more revenue than a retail sales tax, because in addition to retail sales it would reach all wholesale sales, farm sales, professional incomes, salaries, and wages, and even sales of homes and other real property. At that it would not yield enough money to pay the pensions, since the total of all money transactions in 1932 was only $136,000,000,000.

To meet these facts establishing the impossibility of the Townsend plan, the claim is made that the adoption of this plan would increase the total national income to 240 or 300 billions a year. This claim is based on the premise that every dollar of money issued turns over ten times before it is retired —some of the publications say ten times per year. This is manifestly a concept of the physical circulation of money which has no relation whatever to national income. The absurdity of the claim of a marvelous increase in business is manifest when it is realized that thirty-two billion dollars was distributed in wages, salaries, and other forms of labor income in the United States last year and yet total retail sales were less than forty billions. How nineteen to twenty-four billion dollars paid to from eight to ten million retired persons over sixty years of age will produce from 240 to 300 billion dollars of business, while thirty-two billion dollars actually paid to forty million persons gainfully employed produced less than forty billion dollars of business, the Townsend literature does not explain.

A claim of the Townsend plan advocates which has a great appeal is that the granting of the proposed pensions would immediately create jobs for eight or ten million persons. The assumption in this claim apparently is that everybody over sixty years of age who would be granted a pension is now working. This, of course, is not a fact. Of the entire number of people sixty years old or over, only 4,155,495 were reported in the Census of 1930 to be gainfully employed.

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The largest number of those working, moreover—more than 1,400,000—were employed in agriculture, and there were other very large groups in trade, in the professions, and in public service. In fact, there were only a little more than a million persons of sixty or over who were engaged in manufacturing industries, and not all of these, of course, were wage-earners. Adoption of the Townsend plan would not give jobs, at least immediately, to any large part of the total number now unemployed. Whether it would do so ultimately depends upon the validity of the claim that the payment of pensions would enormously increase business. The placing of a great deal of money in the hands of eight to ten million persons in the oldest age group would undoubtedly have a stimulating effect on business, but the proposed sales tax would have just the opposite effect and a transactions tax a still more retarding effect. The net total effect upon business cannot be foretold, but it certainly is very unlikely that the Townsend plan would be a panacea for all present economic ills.

In the Driftway

IN the London *New Statesman and Nation* for December 8 the Drifter has just read a mournful article deploring the ruination of the English landscape by that miserable tree, the conifer! They may be well enough, says the *New Statesman's* "Critic," "in high latitudes where no other trees will grow," or on Mediterranean cliffs or Alpine valleys or the Alban Hills. But not as a substitute for "the traditional trees which are part of the poetry of England." "This process," Critic adds, "like the stripping of their historic contents from great houses, is a part of the price we are paying for the gradualness of our socialization." About the socialization of England the Drifter is not competent to speak; but he is rather an expert on conifers, or rather as much of an expert as a little knowledge and much admiration entitles him to be.

* * * * *

THE conifer, of course, needs no defense from the Drifter, but he has just returned from a New England holiday, and has seen it in all its northeastern glory. Even in a mild English climate, he seems to recall, the deciduous trees shed their leaves in winter. In New England they are delicately bare, their twigs making the various patterns, so readily distinguishable, conditioned by their genus. And in between and around them the hillsides are darkened by pine and feathery hemlock. Even the second- and third-growth pine makes a good showing, and here and there the bold crown of an older and taller pine stands shaggily out. These are conifers, neighbor Critic. They are full, dark green, copious, grand. Close up, the hemlocks drip small, neat cones from the ends of their branches; closer still, the bark of the old pines is deep-furrowed, reverently ancient: stand next the trunk and look up along its great height, and at the top see the sun glancing on the green plumes. There is nothing like a gnarled oak in a meadow by itself, or a tall, umbrella-topped elm—unless it is a solitary pine. On the farm where the Drifter spent his Christmas there is a grandfather pine, growing on the edge of what a hundred years ago was a well-traveled road. Unlike the tall, straight forest pines, its massive branches begin less than ten feet from its base. They are gigantic arms thrust out protectingly over the old highway, making deep crotches for children to climb easily about in. Not the largest living giant could circle the trunk with his long arms. Just a conifer, Critic; but take the Drifter's word for it, it really wouldn't make a bad impression even in the New Forest.

* * * * *

THE Drifter forbears to mention the Western redwoods that have grown 400 feet high and 31 feet through at the base. Nor will he discuss the carpet of reddish-brown needles which, under a grove of conifers, is so yielding and soft under foot. The cause of Critic's complaint, of course, is not that noble tree, the conifer, but the English climate, in which, apparently it only ignobly grows. A country which—like the Duchy of Cornwall, for example—can produce trees only about twenty feet high, with branches twisted and warped by the everlasting wind, is not suited to mast-tall pines. (It is true that in that English climate some very creditable oaks and beeches grow, and considerable impressive green grass.) But the English landscape as a whole is too intimate, too cultivated for pines—except for the moors, on which practically nothing grows except gorse, sheep, and Brontës. And the Drifter will agree with Critic that nothing would be so depressing, in that landscape, as plantations of suburban evergreens, primly thrusting up their little pointed noses—conifers in name only.

THE DRIFTER

Correspondence

Farm Loans Once More

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

Your issue of November 7 containing Mr. Jerome Waxman's letter entitled Farm Loans has only just reached me. He says that, in my letter to you entitled Bankers and Money Changers I failed to state important facts, and being unable to accuse me explicitly of such failure, he implies that the land on which I sought a farm loan was uninhabitable swamp land, and that in my letters to Messrs. Gaston, Johnson, and Van Sant I did not state the truth about it. I challenge him to produce these letters and publish them. I wish to inform your readers that the land was truly described at and after the time of the original application for the loan. The land is not "uninhabitable swamp land." In pretending that it is "uninhabitable swamp land" the bank officials are trying to deceive the public and to justify their arbitrary interpretation and administration of the Emergency Farm Mortgage Act.

The land in question is fertile upland, as a brief inspection would prove. It is in a regular farming country and was used by the owners for the production of a great variety of fruits, vegetables, grain, and hay. The man who occupied it when I applied for the loan had corn growing on it, but the rocking-chair inspector from the land bank closed his eyes to the growing corn as his bosses ordered him to do. As I stated in my letter to you, the Federal Land Bank of Springfield never lends money on any farm unless its owner possesses large resources in addition to the value of his farm equity, but this fact is not openly admitted by the bank or by government underlings for

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fear of public censure. The Emergency Farm Loan law was enacted to help all those who wanted to make a living on land instead of asking for "relief," but the bank continued to run in its pre-emergency ruts of greedy, narrow-minded favoritism, forgetting that the people of the country will be benefited by small loans more than by the so-called dole.

Rutherford, N. J., December 24 MARY E. LIVESEY

Relief in the Coal Fields

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

For the past three years you have kindly opened your columns from time to time to reports of the special services of relief and rehabilitation being carried on by the Quakers, with the cooperation of the Federal Council of Churches, in the bituminous coal fields of West Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Kentucky. We should like to extend our thanks to your many readers who have contributed money or clothing to this emergency work in what is perhaps the neediest area in America.

You will be glad to learn that this work is entering its fourth year with increasing emphasis on rehabilitation and educational aspects. A conference of the twenty-four field workers held recently at Morgantown, West Virginia, brought out the urgent needs to be met and the substantial services being rendered by this picked group of workers. The varied projects include subsistence gardens and canning, furniture and handicraft shops, supplementary relief, a health clinic service, and workers' education classes, both on subsistence homesteads and in certain active coal-mining centers. Close cooperation is maintained with state and federal government relief agencies, coal operators, and the union. Small libraries are now being started in a number of communities which have never had such facilities before. A study course entitled "The Human Price of Coal," including suggested solutions for the problems of the industry, is available for churches and study groups at twenty cents per copy.

Contributions are urgently needed and may be sent to Olive Van Horn, Treasurer, Coal Areas Committee, 105 East Twenty-second Street, New York City. Books and clothing should be shipped prepaid to 1515 Cherry Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

New York, January 2 JAMES MYERS

A Come-back for Judge Lindsay

TO THE EDITORS OF THE NATION:

I am sure the readers of *The Nation* will be happy to know that Judge Ben Lindsay, after being so outrageously treated in Colorado, was elected in November to be Superior Court Judge of Los Angeles County, California. The vote was the largest ever cast for that office in the history of California and Judge Lindsay won in spite of bitter and unscrupulous opposition.

New York, January 2 PERCIVAL MUSGRAVE

Not Fit to Print, an article on the Newspaper Guild by one of its leading members, will appear next week. It gives the newspaperman's answer to the publishers' bitter attack on the principle of collective bargaining as set forth in the recent decision of the National Labor Relations Board.

Like "100,000,000 GUINEA PIGS", *this book "names names"!*

SKIN DEEP

The Truth About Beauty Aids—Safe and Harmful

By M. C. Phillips

of Consumers' Research (the organization whose researches provided the facts behind 100,000,000 Guinea Pigs.)

DO YOU KNOW of the prominent Dayton, Ohio, society matron who lost her eyesight as the result of using an eyelash dye? The dye is still being sold.

?

—of the wife of a Hollywood director whose face, arms, and neck were burned when a well-known dry shampoo (really a "dry cleaner") exploded?

?

—of the woman who was blinded by a depilatory?

—that certain cosmetics contain salts of mercury?

—of the reducing drug "discovered" in a munitions factory, where the workers who were fat soon lost their rotundity — and which is so dangerous that a doctor who attempted to administer it to himself was slowly cooked to death?

?

DO YOU KNOW what perspiration suppressor also tenderizes the cotton cloth it touches?

?

DO YOU KNOW that hair dyes can — and frequently do — cause skin eruptions, facial disfigurement and even more unpleasant consequences?

?

DO YOU KNOW that the so-called "women's magazines" of the "better kind" (including those that have "household institutes" and "seals of approval" accept advertising for many of the potentially dangerous cosmetics mentioned in this book?

Some Press Comments:

"It is an entirely frank and fearless book and bluntly names names."
—THE NEW YORK TIMES

"Not only readable but full of valuable information . . . Miss Phillips does not rail at the use of cosmetics in general; what she does is to name preparations which are harmful and even dangerous to life, and at the same time to recommend those which have been found to be safe and reliable after unbiased analysis by the chemists of the Consumers' Research."
—THE SATURDAY REVIEW OF LITERATURE

"A devastating analysis of widely advertised beauty aids and cosmetics, naming names of products dangerous and harmless."
—LEWIS GANNETT IN THE N. Y. HERALD TRIBUNE

"There is, however, no general law at present that requires a manufacturer to declare the ingredients of his cosmetics on the label or even to include a warning of any potentially poisonous ingredients."
— Skin Deep, page 54

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Labor and Industry

The Great "Bootleg" Coal Industry

By LOUIS ADAMIC

Shamokin, Pennsylvania, December 22

EIGHT nights ago, on driving into Pennsylvania's hard-coal country, I put up at a roadside hotel in the southern part of the region and, although tired, slept hardly a wink all night. My windows were on the crossing of two state highways, and every three or four minutes a truck roared by. A coal truck. Now and then four, five trucks thundered or sputtered past in a row, shaking the ground under the hotel and me in my bed. I could not help rising every once in a while and going to the window to watch the procession. Through the night there passed that spot hundreds of trucks, large and small, new and old—some loaded with coal to the rim, others empty. The loaded ones, as I learned in the ensuing days, were headed for New York City, Brooklyn, various New Jersey towns, Philadelphia, Chester, Wilmington, Baltimore. The "empties" were returning from these places. The two-way streams of heavy traffic moved all night and continued, a bit thinned out, in the daytime. But this was nothing new. It has been going on now at this rate for over a year, practically without interruption. And similar streams of coal trucks have been moving all this time on other highways connecting the southern section of the anthracite region with the great population centers on the Atlantic seaboard and in upstate New York.

They are part of one of the most interesting, not to say exciting, socio-economic phenomena developed in the United States during these years of depression—the so-called "bootleg" coal, coal illegally mined by the unemployed in the mining towns from company-owned lands, for the most part in open daylight, by the most primitive methods imaginable, in complete disregard of private property rights and successful defiance of company police, and, in most places, with the full approval of the constituted authorities and of the overwhelming majority of the other inhabitants of the community; it is sold in the open market to the tune of nearly a half-million tons a month in competition with the legitimately mined coal —a fact which is beginning to cause anthracite operators and regular coal dealers in numerous Eastern cities and towns no end of perturbation.

Bootleg coal has a long, complicated history. Here, for brevity's sake, I shall summarize its innocent beginnings and, lest I strain some reader's credulity, somewhat simplify the fantastic situation as it exists today.

Ever since anyone in the Pennsylvania anthracite field can remember, it has been customary for miners and their families to go with sacks or pails to the culm dumps surrounding their bleak towns and pick coal from among the rock and slate thrown out in the breaking and cleaning processes at the big collieries. The pickers usually were the poorer families. Most of the companies permitted this, and the "pickings," as a rule, were used for fuel in miners' homes. Occasionally some miner paid his church dues or a small grocery bill with a few bags of coal he had picked up on the dumps. No one ever sold it for cash.

An old miner in the town of Shenandoah told me that during the great 1902 strike, when many families experienced serious difficulties in keeping body and soul together, so many pickers invaded the culm heaps that after a while hardly a lump of coal was to be found; so he and several other family men went "in the woods up on the hill over there," where they knew coal was near the surface, and "sunk a few holes," and dug what coal they needed for their own use. They worked at night. They had an uneasy feeling that this was not unrelated to thievery, "but what could a man do, I ask you, with winter here and not a dollar to his name to buy fuel with?" This, so far as I can determine, was the first time that miners started "holes" on company property without authority from the owners.

Early in the 1920's equipment in the collieries became so efficient that not only were thousands thrown out of work, but practically no coal was thrown upon the culm dumps; free pickings became scarcer and scarcer, and finally almost a matter of history. The result was that when hard times hit them, the miners resorted to illegal mining in increasing numbers, but still only for their own use and mostly at night. During the winter months of the stubborn 1925 strike several hundred holes were opened throughout the anthracite region. The strike ended, but conditions went from bad to worse because the companies, finding labor more and more difficult to deal with, began to instal still more efficient machinery, which threw additional thousands out of work and permitted other thousands but part-time employment; so some of the holes opened during the walkout continued to be operated, and from time to time others were started. By and by, under the pressure of extreme economic necessity, illegal miners began to dig coal for their neighbors for cash, and in 1928 and 1929 there probably were from seven to nine hundred men in the six anthracite counties whose income came solely or mainly from "bootleg" coal—as they and their customers commenced jokingly to call it, because it was, in most cases, mined and delivered secretly at night.

In 1930, when the current depression engulfed the country, coal bootlegging probably doubled. In the town of Centralia, where nearly all legitimate coal production had ceased even in 1929, the number of illegal miners at least trebled. In the winter of 1930-31, when growing numbers of people appeared before township and county poor boards with requests for fuel, the board in not a few cases told them to get their own fuel. Where? How? The board members sometimes shrugged their shoulders or suggested that the nearby hills were full of coal. That winter coal bootlegging again doubled or trebled in most towns. In Centralia it became the main industry. It kept the stores open, the people from moving out. The bootleggers, as they actually called themselves, started to work their holes and haul down their loot in the daytime. When the coal companies had some

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of them arrested, the poor boards promptly effected their release if they proved they had dug the coal for their own use; and in most cases the bootlegger's say-so was sufficient proof to satisfy the poor-board members, most of whom were ordinary townspeople and, for reasons of their own, more or less anti-company. Then, too, the local courts were strongly disinclined to sentence these offenders; and when they sent them to jail, the wardens soon turned them loose. Here and there the companies blew up the bootleggers' holes, but, as the depression continued, for every hole they blew up three or four new ones immediately appeared. Also, town and county officials cautioned the representatives of the various companies that unless they allowed the jobless to operate their holes, taxes would have to be increased to pay for more relief, and some of these higher taxes would be levied on the coal mines. Thus the companies were forced or induced to "tolerate" the bootleggers, and bootlegging—not only digging, but selling as well—came into the full light of day (as in Centralia a year before) in Shamokin, Mount Carmel, Ashland, Treverton, Kulpmont, Shenandoah, Girardville, Mahonoy City, Tamaqua, Lansford, Coaldale, Pottsville, Lykens, Tower City, Reinerton, Valley View, Hegins, Donaldson, Tremont, Branchdale, Minersville, Heckscherville, Brackville, Gilberton, Middleport, Port Carbon, Williamstown, William Penn, Big Mine Run, Lost Creek, and other towns and villages in the southern section of the region.

In 1931 most of the coal distributed by the bootleggers was sold within twenty-five miles of where they had dug it. Much of it was delivered in sacks in the back of the bootleggers' flivvers or in small trucks hired for the purpose. That year the whole illegal output probably did not amount to more than half a million tons. In 1932, with unemployment reaching a new high, the number of bootleggers at least doubled once more and their output and business probably trebled. In the same year, it is estimated, around a thousand men, mostly young men and boys just out of high school, sons of bootleg miners, acquired second-hand or new trucks on the instalment plan by paying one, two, three hundred dollars down, and bootleg coal began to be sold as far as fifty, seventy, ninety miles from the holes.

Since bootleg coal was peddled at a price anywhere from one to three dollars cheaper than regularly mined coal, there was great demand for it, and after a high pick-up in the last half of 1932 the business got into full stride in 1933, and today, as 1934, the fifth year of the depression, is about to amble off, there are in the anthracite region around 5,000 holes or tiny coal mines in places where coal is near the top of the earth, operated six days a week, each by from two to five men who, in most instances, have no other equipment than picks, shovels, dynamite, a lamp, a pail, and a hoisting rope; while 10,000 or more such holes already have been "robbed out." In a single town, Shamokin, about 3,500 men and boys are busy every day of the week but Sunday illegally digging and transporting coal. In Mount Carmel their number is close to 2,300, in Shenandoah approximately the same, and so on. In the entire region of 500 square miles which stretches from Forest City in the northeast to Shamokin in the southwest we have from 15,000 to 20,000 men and boys thus occupied, more than two-thirds of them being in the southern field, where bootleg mining is favored by geological conditions too complicated to be explained here. The total number of trucks hauling bootleg coal from the holes to the consumers is between 3,500 and 5,000, and from two to three men earn their living on each vehicle.*

Most of the miners and truckers are heads or members of families; so it is safe to estimate that 100,000 men, women, and children are directly dependent for their livelihood, solely or mainly, on bootleg coal, while indirectly nearly everybody in the above-listed and several other towns and villages benefits from bootleg coal. Bootleg coal, in fact, is the chief basis of economic life not only in Centralia, which I have mentioned, but to a lesser extent also in Shamokin, Mount Carmel, Shenandoah, Girardville, Mahonoy City, Tremont, and at least a dozen other communities. Even Pottsville and Hazleton wouldn't be the lively cities they are without bootleg coal. The amount involved in the bootleg coal business in 1933 is estimated to have been between $30,000,000 and $35,000,000, while in the last twelve months the illegal miners and truckers have "stolen" from the anthracite companies' lands from four and a half to five and a half million tons of coal, involving between $40,000,000 and $45,000,000; and most of this money stayed right in the communities where the miners and truckers reside, and was spent and respent there.

In other words, bootleg coal is big business; only no one engaged in it makes big money. Through the year few bootleg miners and truckers average more than $2.50 a day. The huge total sum involved in the bootleg industry is spread out very thin. It benefits enormously, not privileged individuals, as does the so-called legitimately mined coal, but the communities and the region as a whole. It keeps stores, banks, movies, restaurants, drinking places, gas stations open. It enables business people to employ help and buy advertising space in local newspapers. And so on.

Naturally, then, nearly everybody in the towns where bootleg coal has become an established industry is very much in favor of it. I interviewed hundreds of persons, and practically no one free of connection with a coal company had anything to say against it. I spoke with scores of bootleg miners and truckers, and the following are some of their statements: "We gotta live, don't we? . . . There's no work for us in the collieries with their new machines and new ways of doing things. We must do something! . . . In this town 75 per cent of the mine workers are unemployed. The relief we're supposed to get isn't half enough even for food; how about rent, light, gas, and water, clothes and tobacco? And we're entitled to a glass of beer once in a while, ain't we? Our kids and women want to take in a movie now and then. Also we gotta pay our union, lodge, and church dues. . . . As for the 'stealing' part of it, how did the different companies get their coal lands? In some cases they paid $6 an acre; was that a fair price? In other cases they stole it from the Indians. Was that a nice thing to do? Well [laughing], we're the new Indians, taking what coal we can back from the companies. . . . We 'steal' coal in order to keep from becoming thieves and hold-up men, which, to keep alive, we probably would be forced to become if we didn't have these holes."

The storekeepers with whom I talked were unanimous in saying that, as far as their businesses were concerned, bootleg coal was a lifesaver. Most of them burned illegal coal in their homes and stores. The chief of police and a city

* Some of the above, as some of the following, figures may be disputed. No accurate statistics are available, of course. The figures are a compromise between the bootleggers' exaggerated idea of their strength and the more moderate estimate of the company officials.

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councilman of Mount Carmel were unreservedly in favor of bootleg coal. An editor of the Mount Carmel *Item* remarked that while the paper was neutral in the matter, he had no hesitation in saying that but for bootleg coal he might not have a job. Other newspapermen expressed themselves similarly. An officer of the state police, when I asked him what his force was doing to protect the company's property rights, smiled and shrugged his shoulders; for Governor Pinchot's administration in Harrisburg has been decidedly friendly to the bootleggers.

The bootleg towns are preponderantly Catholic; so, feigning concern for the Eighth Commandment, I approached several parish priests, some of whom, I had heard, were accepting church dues in the form of bootleg coal and were using it to heat their churches, parochial schools, and parish houses. All declared that the Eighth Commandment had no bearing on coal bootlegging. The so-called bootleggers, they said, had as much right to the coal they were digging as the companies. Besides, most of the bootleg holes were in places where the companies would never have bothered to take the coal out anyhow—which is true. Father Weaver, the rector of a parish in Mount Carmel, said that should the companies employ armed force to clear their lands of illegal miners, and should the men in such a case decide to fight, he would be unable to restrain himself from getting into the battle on their side. "Some of them," he went on, "are my parishioners; honest, upstanding working people. I'm proud to be their priest. It is absolutely untrue that this bootleg coal situation is having a bad effect on the bootleggers' characters or that, as the companies say, there have developed in this town 'other rackets' in connection with, or as a result of, bootleg coal. Coal bootlegging has no bad moral effect on the people. It keeps them from starving and turning into criminals. . . . Let the companies give the men work in the collieries and illegal mining will cease at once. The men are not bootlegging because they like it. They risk their lives every minute they work in those holes, and deserve everyone's respect and admiration. They have mine."

They have mine, too. In fact, after I saw them work in and around their holes, my respect for the human race in general went up several notches. The sheer "guts" and stamina necessary to sink and work a bootleg coal hole is all but incredible. Imagine a hole in the ground, barely wide enough for a man to let himself down in, usually vertical, sometimes cut into living rock, anywhere from twenty to a hundred feet deep, with just sufficient room at the bottom for the miner to sit or kneel and work his pick and shovel and sticks of dynamite. Personally, I would rather do anything than start and operate such a hole; but then, of course, I am not a miner in extreme economic circumstances, nor a miner's son with mining in his blood and no chance of regular employment. It takes two, three, or four men from two weeks to two months to sink a hole and reach the outcrop, after which they usually strike coal. Working mainly on hunches, they very often find no coal, and all the terrific labor is in vain. When they find it, two, three, or four men produce about as many tons a day, hoisting the stuff to the top of the hole with rope and buckets, then breaking it, often with hammers by hand or chunk against chunk, and cleaning and sorting it also by hand, unless they have a primitive breaker and shaker either at the hole or behind their houses in town. The work is back-breaking and extremely hazardous. Most holes are inadequately timbered and cave-ins are frequent, trapping or crushing the men below. Sometimes the ground at the bottom of the hole, where the man is knocking or blasting out the coal, sinks away from under him and he tumbles into the flooded cavern of some worked-out mine, and that, of course, is the last of him.

Everybody who knows anything about the conditions under which bootleg coal is produced respects and admires the bootleggers, and often considers them heroes; and this—together with the fact that the whole thing is so typical of this resourceful, highly individualistic, anarchic, and fantastic America of ours—operates to create public sentiment strongly in favor of the illegal miners, quite apart from the economic benefits that this curious industry brings to the communities. Even a company official said to me: "Those fellows take such gosh-awful chances that in a way they're entitled to that coal."

The coal is sold to truckers who come to the holes at from $4.50 to $5.75 a ton, depending on the quality and on whether it is stove or nut. The truckers have either direct customers of their own in Philadelphia, New York, Baltimore, or wherever they take it, or agents who get the orders for them from housewives and landlords. Delivered, say, in Philadelphia, Newark, or New York, the coal sells from $8.50 to $11, or a dollar or two cheaper than regular coal. The agent gets from 25 to 75 cents a ton commission. The bootleg coal usually is not as clean-looking as regular anthracite, but actually most of it is quite as good. Demand for it continues to exceed production, and everywhere in the southern section of the region I saw trucks waiting for loads at the holes. Production, however, rises steadily; and if nothing drastic is done by the companies or the state to stop it, the business is likely to continue booming in 1935.

Most of the coal now being "stolen" from the bootleg holes, as already suggested, would never have been touched by the companies who legally own the lands. It would have been too uneconomical for them to mine it. Much of it was left over by regular mining operations. Only in a few places —Shamokin, for one—are the bootleggers tapping big veins, which the owners eventually would strip and get out with giant steam shovels. So in most cases the regular operators do not object so much to the coal being "stolen" as to its being sold so successfully in such large quantities; for between 5 and 10 per cent of all anthracite sold in the United States these past two years was bootleg. That is serious competition, cutting deeply into the profits of the operators and distributors. In view of the fact that the whole law and order apparatus, the moral forces, and most of the general public opinion favor the bootleggers, the operators can do little about it at the sources of bootleg coal, now that the thing has been allowed to develop as I have described it. In Shamokin, early in December, the Stevens Coal Company tried to start stripping operations on the so-called Edgewood Bootleggers' Tract, where 1,700 illegal miners eke out their livelihood, but the men promptly dynamited the steam shovel and told the company employees who brought it up to beat it. No one has been arrested for the deed. At Tremont, two months ago, more than a thousand bootleggers faced about fifty company police, and a battle was averted only by the withdrawal of the police. At Gilberton not long ago the automobile of a coal-and-iron cop was dynamited after he had blown up several holes. The Philadelphia and Reading

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Coal and Iron Company's private police blew up, between the first of January and the last of November of this year, 1,196 holes, but in that time at least 4,000 new ones were started on their properties. During the same period the same company caused the arrest of seventy-seven bootleggers, but in vain. No jury in any anthracite county is ready to convict anyone for "stealing" or trucking coal.

So lately the desperate operators and distributors have been spending vast sums of money and no end of energy and legal and public-relations talent to ruin the bootleg coal business in Philadelphia, Newark, and elsewhere by telling the public, through the newspapers and otherwise, that bootleg coal is a heartless racket run by a few wise guys who exploit thousands of men, women, and children; that bootleg coal is dirty and otherwise inferior; that bootleg truckers deliver short weights, and so on. In Philadelphia the authorities were induced to invoke against the bootleg coal truckers old ordinances regulating weights and truck traffic which had not been enforced against the regular coal dealers and truckers for years. Upon the highways in New Jersey the state police are induced to arrest bootleg truckers for transporting stolen goods, and there have recently been instances of heavy fines and jail sentences. But so far all these efforts of the companies have had no serious effect on the virility of the bootleg-coal industry. What other measures the companies will think of, I don't know. Certain it is, however, that they will do everything possible to regain the market that bootleg coal has taken from them. Much will depend on the attitude that the incoming administration in Harrisburg will take toward the problem. Governor Earle will probably be inclined to follow the Pinchot policy of friendliness toward the bootleggers, for in the last election they showed themselves to be a political power; but it is possible that the new Lieutenant Governor, Tom Kennedy, who is also international secretary-treasurer of the United Mine Workers—which organization in the anthracite region is essentially a collection of company unions and therefore anti-bootlegger—will try to prevail upon the highest authorities in the state to help the companies bring about a showdown on the matter and drive the bootleggers out of their holes.

Meantime the bootleggers are organizing to protect what they call their interests. In Shamokin I attended a meeting of the Independent Coal Producers at which I was given to understand that, while eager for peace, they were ready to fight "for their right to live." The same is true of organizations in the Tremont district and in Mahonoy City, where not long ago Congressman-elect James Gildea spoke at a meeting of 400 bootleggers called to protest against the dynamiting of a number of holes by the companies. Mr. Gildea, who is a Coaldale man, declared he was with the bootleggers. They had been instrumental in electing him. Several illegal miners said to me: "If they close our holes, we'll gang up on their collieries and close them."

The bootleggers are so strong that in all probability no drastic action will immediately be taken against them. The thing probably will go on for quite a while. It will be full of possibilities, however, chiefly in the direction of violence; for in the anthracite region dynamite is plentiful, while labor-trouble service agencies are urging the companies to fill the holes with light poison gas, which would stay in them for months and sicken the bootleggers who attempted to work them.

At the end bootleg coal probably will peter out, as do most things in America. Here and there groups of bootleggers already are coming to terms with the companies and are beginning to pay them royalties on every ton of coal they dig. I met company officials who felt that eventually the New Deal might come to their aid. The federal government might take the surplus populations in these towns and transfer them to the land—to subsistence homesteads, of which there has been talk for some time.

Some of the radical intellectuals who have visited the region to the contrary notwithstanding, there is no revolution in coal bootlegging. Most of the bootleggers are anti-Communist, and the few, very few, radicals I met among them told me that bootlegging is largely responsible for the fact that there is almost no real radicalism, no movement of any size, in the southern anthracite towns. Coal bootlegging is nothing more or less than a depression industry. But eventually it may have some slight revolutionary importance. This "stealing" on such a grand scale in open daylight unquestionably causes hundreds of thousands of people—not only the bootleggers—to contemplate private property rights with less awe, and the eventual nationalization of coal mines possibly will come a bit easier and faster because of it.

White-Collar Strike

By H. K.

Milwaukee, December 27

FOUR weeks ago, in a stinging rain, picketing began in the first large white-collar workers' strike of the New Deal. After weeks of futile advances to the Boston Store management, more than 600 of the store's 1,000 employees struck. The pickets are still marching, the strike is still on, though the United States Department of Labor and the national, regional, and local labor boards have done their utmost to stop them, though the A. F. of L., through its state officers and counsel and a personal representative of William Green, has urged them to give in to terms of defeat. A victory, all sides agree, will lead at once to higher wages and better conditions in other Milwaukee stores, including the Gimbel Brothers and Sears Roebuck chains; a victory will be the beginning of the abrogation of the vicious national retail code with its starvation wages. Defeat for the Boston Store strikers may easily kill the efforts of all store employees to better their intolerable conditions for years to come. None know these truths better than the employers. Through their widely circulated daily and weekly papers the powerful mercantile interests of the country are exerting the pressure that no doubt led to the sending of numerous peace emissaries from Washington and Chicago. Locally the other large stores have aided their stricken competitor against the common enemy by furnishing him with lists of extra employees and closing their eyes to price chiseling.

Needless to say, the local press has given the management the benefit of all doubts. Such news items as the throwing of stink bombs that routed customers and an amazing march through the store of thirty women shoppers sympathetic to the strikers were not mentioned. The all impor-

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The N. A. A. C. P.

(National Association for the Advancement of Colored People)

"defended" him into a life sentence

George Crawford, a Negro, today is serving two consecutive life terms. He was convicted of the murder of two Southern women, because Charles Houston, of the N.A.A.C.P., his lawyer, betrayed him. Crawford's innocence might have been established through alibi witnesses — but Houston refused to call them. There was strong suspicion that another man had compelling motives to commit the crime— Houston refused to press the investigation in this direction. An appeal from the conviction might have resulted in a reversal of the verdict of guilty and the establishment of Crawford's innocence — but Houston refused to take the appeal. Why? . . . *Read the complete, detailed story of*

The Truth About the Crawford Case

by Martha Gruening

IN THIS WEEK'S

NEW MASSES

□ JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH says □

ANYTHING GOES. Alvin Theater. Victor Moore as Public Enemy No. 13 in a No. 1 musical revue, with Ethel Merman at her best.

GOLD EAGLE GUY. Morosco Theater. How a ruthless superman built a shipping empire on the West Coast. Excellent production by the Group Theater of a forceful and picturesque drama, with a fine performance by J. Edward Bromberg. One of the best dramas of the season.

EVA LE GALLIENNE and the Civic Repertory Company. Broadhurst Theater. For two weeks beginning Christmas night Miss Le Gallienne is offering her colorful production of Rostand's "L'Aiglon."

MERRILY WE ROLL ALONG. Music Box Theater. One of the outstanding hits and very good indeed if you don't mind having your serious plays use a little staycomb in their hair.

SAILORS OF CATTARO. Civic Repertory Theater. The third and much the best offering by the Theater Union, which goes in for plays with a revolutionary purpose. This one is all about a mutiny on board an Austrian man-of-war, and it is first rate as a play, quite aside from the red-flag waving.

THE CHILDREN'S HOUR. Maxine Elliott's Theater. Tense but grim drama about a fiendishly perverse child, who is played with extraordinary force by Florence McGee. One of the most-discussed plays of the year.

THE FARMER TAKES A WIFE. Forty-sixth Street Theater. Picturesque and remarkably engaging comedy by Frank Elser and Marc Connelly about the great days of the Erie Canal.

VALLEY FORGE. Guild Theater. Maxwell Anderson's entertaining drama about George Washington, with Philip Merivale as the Father of His Country. The whole thing seemed very pleasantly theatrical to me, but there are many who take it more seriously without liking it any the less.

WITHIN THE GATES. National Theater. Sean O'Casey's poetic and symbolic morality play about the Dreamer, the Bishop, and the Young Whore in Hyde Park. According to many good critics it is the great modern play, but I found it a bit pretentious.

tant news that the federated trades council had placed the Boston Store on the unfair list got only a paragraph at the end of a long statement by store officials, copied from their advertisement in the same issue. Moreover, this blacklisting, though it was announced on Saturday, did not see print until Monday, when the store's advertisement also appeared.

In spite of the overwhelming forces against them, the strikers have to date been surprisingly successful. Their vigorous picketing utterly ruined the store's Christmas trade. Its officials admitted a drop of 30 per cent in sales from the same period of last year—this at a time when other Milwaukee stores were piling up huge increases over last year.

The attitude of the store management has been provocative; its statements have been uniformly distorted or untrue. It began by furnishing a list of all strikers to the police and instructing new employees to report to the police at "the least sign of disturbance." In a full-page advertisement it falsely stated that the international of the clerks' union had outlawed the strike, and boasted that it was paying the full $14 a week code minimum to all full-time employees. The League of Women Shoppers, a group organized independently to aid the strikers, called a meeting to tell the public the strikers' side. About eight hundred persons attended. Mrs. Victor L. Berger was chairman. Eight strikers told their reasons for walking out. Income-tax reports were quoted showing that in 1933 four officials of the store received salaries and dividends totaling $149,000. Strikers said they were living better on county relief than they could on their salaries.

The strike is in fact a strike in behalf of all store employees against the miserable retail-trade code, written by the powerful interests, administered by all-employer boards, approved by the government, and upheld by a press which depends on the good-will of the big stores.

A Rubber Election

TAKING its stand beside automobiles and steel the tire and rubber industry has refused to comply with a recent decision of the National Labor Relations Board calling for an election of collective-bargaining representatives. Ordered by the board to submit payroll figures and other data for a secret election, the Firestone and Goodrich rubber companies petitioned the federal Court of Appeals at Cincinnati to review the order. The companies challenge not only the constitutionality of the board but also the right of Congress to create such a board; and company attorneys have admitted that the fight will be carried to the Supreme Court if necessary. The arrogance of the rubber barons has not been lessened by the quality of A. F. of L. leadership in the industry. On the theory that union objectives could better be obtained through an election, a strike has not even been threatened. The union has avoided taking any aggressive step as an organization apart from government help, in spite of the horrible examples of Weirton and Houde. At the same time a staff of corporation lawyers is preparing further court action to "protect" the company unions in case the petitions are denied, promising more delay. Meanwhile active membership in the A. F. of L. unions is said to have dropped to about 30 per cent of the 18,000 previously reported. With the seasonal increase in production now beginning, the companies will undoubtedly further weaken the unions by replacing old employees with "raw" labor from the hills of the Southern states.

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Books and Drama

Nada and "Diamat"

Literature and Dialectical Materialism. By John Strachey. Covici-Friede. $1.

THE title of this lecture by Mr. Strachey is much more ambitious than anything in its contents justifies. As an informal application of the Marxist thesis to various pressing contemporary concerns—the challenge to culture under fascism, the increasing contradictions of the capitalist system, the predicament of modern literature in general and of certain modern writers in particular—the lecture possesses those qualities of personal persuasiveness which have made Mr. Strachey the most popular exponent of Marxism in the English-speaking countries. But order, in the sense of a concentrated development of a particular subject, it does not possess; and one may best describe Mr. Strachey's lecture as a series of variations on the Marxist theme. You will look in vain for any intensive treatment of the precise relations between the two topics announced in the title. The reason for the lack of concentration on these relations is, of course, not hard to discover. Literature, being one of the most complex of cultural manifestations, is always extremely difficult to define both as to its nature and to its function. And dialectic materialism is a phrase which has come to be used so loosely nowadays that it is no longer clear how much it is supposed to cover. Like so many others, Mr. Strachey embarks on the discussion of a relationship the exact meaning of whose separate terms he has not taken enough trouble to determine in his own mind. And the result is only the addition of a little further confusion to a subject which is perhaps doomed to a certain degree of confusion always because of the complexity of the conceptions with which it has to deal.

The primary confusion in Mr. Strachey's lecture arises out of the problem of the function of literature in any culture. For the most part Mr. Strachey, like so many other writers devoted to the cause of proletarian revolution, is inclined to claim at once too much and too little for literature. He seems to claim for it a social function of the greatest importance, that of stating and clarifying the best interests of society in any time and place. At the same time he seems unaware of its possible function, like that of every other form of art, of serving as a corrective to dogma by breaking through the too sharply defined patterns of experience set up in every time by every dogma. For Mr. Strachey, most of the time, the value of a literary work is to be discovered through some more or less explicit statement of a conscious attitude or point of view, usually of a politico-economic nature. From among Archibald MacLeish's voluminous poetic works he chooses for illustration "Frescoes for Mr. Rockefeller's City," that one of this poet's compositions, namely, from which something like a social point of view, however mixed and emotive, may be detached. And to match the fascist implications of this poem Mr. Strachey turns to a very poor lyric by that young English poet who is most likely to become the Rupert Brooke of the present generation. (In both examples, it may be remarked, the inferior quality of the poetry as poetry is a direct consequence of the too self-conscious enunciation of the point of view.) Naturally, the problem of literary judgment is much simplified by this peremptory reduction of literature to social statement. It becomes merely a problem of deciding on which side of the line, to use Mr. Strachey's phrase, a writer is to be placed: Stephen Spender is *ipso facto* a better poet than Archibald MacLeish. If the statement of a dogma is the principal function of literature, the orthodoxy of the dogma becomes the sole question. It is only when Mr. Strachey comes to a more fully developed literary personality like Ernest Hemingway that he is forced to recognize that the critical problem may not be so simple. Once again he turns to a rather rare and uncharacteristic lapse into abstract statement on the part of his chosen author. The work quoted from is the short story A Clean, Well-lighted Place in the volume "Winner Take Nothing," in which appears the now celebrated meditation on death which concludes that all is "nada y pues nada y nada y pues nada y pues nada." Of course this is offered, and rightly so, as an expression of the essentially pessimistic view of life underlying all of Mr. Hemingway's work. (That this is a philosophical rather than a politico-economic view, however, Mr. Strachey willingly enough admits, although he feels compelled to invoke some far-fetched hypotheses to dispose of it.) But a little farther on, after extolling the method of criticism employed by Granville Hicks, Mr. Strachey comes straight to the heart of his embarrassment. He is forced to admit that Mr. Hicks, despite the excellence of his devastating analysis of Hemingway's nihilism, has left something out. Mr. Hicks has failed to recognize Hemingway's "power to create adequate images for his own nihilism." The trouble with Mr. Hicks's type of criticism is that "he hardly seems to pay enough attention to the merits of writers as writers." Here is the most striking admission of the inadequacy of the critical criteria which Mr. Strachey himself has been using throughout his discourse. Here it is that he seems to be most clearly setting up an unresolvable dualism between the writer as spokesman of a doctrine and the writer as writer. When does the writer throw off the one role and assume the other? Is there, or is there not, any inherent connection between his "merits" in the one role and his merits in the other?

The source of the confusion is, as a matter of fact, to be found in a very much earlier passage in which dialectic materialism is mentioned first as "one part of human culture," next as a "cultural system," and finally as a "new synthesis." Leaving to one side the question of how something can be a part of a whole and that whole itself at one and the same time, one wonders whether the error does not really consist in a too easy use of the word culture. Is it justifiable, even in strictly Marxist terminology, to refer to dialectic materialism as a *culture*? In such an orthodox Marxist commentator as Nikolai Bukharin, for example, dialectic materialism is always referred to as an angle, a method, an approach—never as anything more concrete than a point of view. It is an intellectual instrument for describing, analyzing, and predicting the processes of cultural change. But it is never represented as being in itself a culture, that "superstructure" which arises out of the periodic equilibrium of economic forces in the history of a people or of a civilization. If this is an accurate definition, literature and dialectic materialism have only the most remote and indirect relations with each other. "Diamat" (as the term has become abbreviated in the Soviet Union) has always to be applied first of all in the realm of social and economic change—the substructure, according to Marxist dogma, on which all cultural forms are ultimately founded. It must be used to bring about a reorganization in that realm before a culture in which writers are able to function as writers is possible. The two processes—the one of political and social revolution, the other of individual creation—are not unrelated at the present time. But they are not coincident in time, and the attempt to represent them as such is not very helpful either to revolution or to literature. In the European past, literature has shown itself to be the child rather than the companion of social revolution—and usually a very backward child. It is a mistake to believe that its growth can be accelerated by artificial means.

WILLIAM TROY

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The Drama of Peru

Fire on the Andes. By Carleton Beals. J. B. Lippincott Company. $3.

MEXICO and its resurgent Indianism having for some time been the happy hunting ground of archaeologist and ethnologist and then the vogue of American tourists, it was inevitable that the public would be invited to gaze on Peru. The analogies are well known and striking. It too boasts ancient cities, pre-Columbian village cultures, Inca handicrafts, *pisco* as ardent as *tequila,* mightier mountains, jollier jungles, mystery more entrancing, *valuta!* And—tip to the adventurous—whom the casinos of Cuernavaca and the comforts of Chapala begin to cloy, the Inca revolution is still to come, is mayhap imminent. One can fly to Lima in three days.

No one is better qualified than Carleton Beals to make this first comprehensive analysis and survey of contemporary Peru. Written with brilliance and verve, his book conveys the color, the intense contrasts, the cruelty and beauty of the land. Like Gaul, Peru is divided into three parts: the rainless Pacific coast fringe, where scorching aridity shrivels life; the bleak Andean "fortress of a race of quartz men," of crags and condors, rising into the eternal snows, land of the llama; and east of the continental divide the vast equatorial forest through which the melted snows of the cordillera tumble to form the headwaters of the Amazon—the "Green Hell," jungle land of the deadly maraquita tree, of poisonous flowers, snakes, insects, and arrows, of naked cannibals and plumed head-hunters.

This physiography, the variations of climate, the lack of inter-communication have done much to shape the destiny of Peru. But no less important is the ethnic basis of Peruvian history; four centuries after Pizarro it is still the land of Mochicas, Aimaras, Quechuas, Cholos. It is they who, Mr. Beals predicts, will rise against the rule of the "corrupt Creoles" to form "a great unique mountain-tropic culture." Mr. Beals suggests ample justification for such a revolt. Peru is "yet to become a modern state." Its "agriculture is more deficient . . . than under the Incas." Its governments have been "corrupt, inefficient, unpatriotic, unjust, and most stupidly tyrannical," and the land, he asserts, is "held to golden exploitation by ignorant landlords, brutal soldiers, rapacious priests, and degenerate politicians." Lima, the coastal Creole capital, "is still dawdling in the Porfirio Díaz epoch in Mexico," while "all Andean Peru is in the coils of the cocaine vice." A dark picture, unrelieved by heroism, devotion, sacrifice, intelligence, or effort. Not once during Peru's hundred years of independence, asserts the author categorically, has a really noble figure arisen to revindicate the rights of man. Not since the Incas has Peru had a really important national hero, a leader to strike a path to new freedoms.

Will Raul Haya de la Torre, founder and leader of the A. P. R. A. (Alianza Popular Revolucionia Americana) prove to be such? Mr. Beals expresses doubts, although he declares him to be "the outstanding popular figure of all Latin America." But his program Beals deems "too comprehensive . . . opportunistic, bureaucratic, hybrid . . . based on petty-bourgeois reforms with slight collectivist tendencies." Mr. Beals further condemns the A. P. R. A. as "essentially middle class" and asserts that "its nationalistic emphasis gives it a fascist complexion." With the unfavorable connotations of this verdict, the reviewer takes issue. Whatever may be the shortcomings, actual and potential, of the A. P. R. A. movement, it is a counsel of perfection to imagine any attempt at revolution or reform in Peru that will lack these or greater weaknesses. *Aprismo,* as Mr. Beals recognizes, is "the most vital popular force in Peru." Its leader, Haya de la Torre, is high-minded, courageous, steadfast, enlightened. Since he has repeatedly risked his life for his cause, it is scarcely to be wondered that his followers idolize him. He himself has fought against the personalism involved in their worship of him—which is inevitable in Indo-Hispanic America—and has sought to erect his sorely needed reformation of anachronistic Peru on a basis of principle and program. Intellectually and morally he is far ahead of his contemporaries. And his compromising of the A. P. R. A. program, which Mr. Beals censures, may be, given the herculean dimensions of the task, the practical realism of a statesman and patriot who has long since ceased to be doctrinaire. Apra under his leadership may fail, but if it does so, there is scant prospect for anything but tyranny or chaos in Peru during our generation.

ERNEST GRUENING

Was It a Needless War?

The Eve of Conflict. Stephen A. Douglas and the Needless War. By George Fort Milton. Houghton Mifflin Company. $5.

MR. MILTON'S full title suggests his threefold purpose. As "The Eve of Conflict" his book is a detailed and lively history of American politics in the decade immediately preceding the Civil War; as "Stephen A. Douglas" it is the definitive biography of the great Illinois statesman; and as the "Needless War" it is the defense of a thesis which seems to me open to serious objection.

Those familiar with Mr. Milton's masterly presentation of the Reconstruction Era in his "The Age of Hate" will not be disappointed in expecting the same qualities of exhaustive research, skilful arrangement of material, incisive style, and sustained movement of narrative in his treatment of the fateful decade preceding the outbreak of the war between the states. The period has been treated by scores of historians, and it would probably be rash to say that Mr. Milton has put any of its outstanding events, such as the Kansas-Nebraska Act, the Lecompton fraud, or the disruption of the Charleston Convention in a new light. Nevertheless, his access to tens of thousands of unpublished Douglas manuscripts has enabled him to supplement our knowledge of these events with many facts hitherto unknown. He is able, thanks to the exploitation of a vast amount of new Douglas material, to make more precise the contacts of Douglas with other influential men of the era, and to measure the impact of Douglas's views upon the politics of the era with a fulness of detail impossible to the previous historians of a decade in which Douglas, by general consent, was the most conspicuous political figure.

As a biography Mr. Milton's book clearly supersedes all the former lives of Douglas from James Sheahan's to Allen Johnson's and Louis Howland's. Not only does the material put at his disposal by Douglas's grandsons and by the descendants of such intimate coworkers with Douglas as Charles Lanphier, editor of the Illinois *State Register,* furnish the author with documentation for many a hitherto uncertain or disputed point in Douglas's public life, but it also tempts him at times to let loose a perfect spate of footnote references to authenticate some statement of quite minor import as to Douglas's looks, dress, or personal habits. Yet the biography marches with the history in close lockstep. It is the Douglas of "The Eve of Conflict" on whom Mr. Milton wishes to fix our attention. The ancestry, birth, early years, and meager education of the Vermont lad are passed over in a few hasty pages. There are no chapters on Douglas as state's attorney, member of the legislature, Secretary of State, or justice of the Illinois Supreme Court. There is little on his two terms as Congressman from Illinois or on the first half of his first term as United States Senator

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(1847-1850). But from 1850 to his death eleven years later Douglas is revealed to us with a completeness which leaves no thought of his unexplored nor any least political move unprobed.

But Mr. Milton's book is something more than an objective history of the decade of the fifties or a disinterested biography of Stephen A. Douglas. It is a warm indorsement of Douglas's contention that the acceptance of the doctrine of non-interference by Congress with slavery in the territories would have silenced the extremists both north and south of Mason and Dixon's line and so prevented the "Needless War," or at least would have prevented the war from coming as soon as it did—which is a rather embarrassing concession for Mr. Milton's thesis. We can readily agree that no war is "inevitable" in the sense that an earthquake or a tidal wave is inevitable. The question is whether Douglas's remedy could have prevented this *particular* tragedy. I think it extremely doubtful for several reasons. In the first place, Douglas failed to understand the strength of the moral opposition of the North to the extension of slavery. He laid that opposition to Abolitionist hysteria at first, and in its later manifestations to the base and selfish determination of the Republican leaders to make profit for their party out of the misery of their country. He was himself opposed to slavery, as he frankly confessed on many occasions, and he had declined his father-in-law's gift of a Mississippi plantation as a wedding present. But having no objections to others holding slaves wherever the majority of the community approved it, he did not perceive the rapidly maturing conviction, outside the South, that slave property, to quote James Truslow Adams, was "an anachronistic form of property, as obsolete as marriage by capture."

In defending what seems to me Douglas's anachronistic position Mr. Milton says: "Most of the party leaders realized that Popular Sovereignty had a firm hold on the hearts of nine-tenths of the American people." If this was so, it is very difficult to understand why the majority of the voters, North and South, rejected it in 1860. Mr. Milton also says: 'In their interchanges on the House-Divided doctrine, it was Douglas, not Lincoln, who read the future aright." But it seems to me that the "future" vindicated Lincoln's prophecy completely. The proposed Thirteenth Amendment of 1861 made slavery inviolable in the states where it was protected by law; the actual Thirteenth Amendment, adopted in 1865, made the nation all free soil. Did Douglas or Lincoln, then, "read the future aright"?

One would like to ask the shade of Douglas many questions touching the efficacy of his doctrine of Popular Sovereignty to quiet strife and preserve the Union. If a geographical line of demarcation between slave and free, like the Missouri Compromise line, would only serve to perpetuate sectional hostility, as Douglas maintained, what prospect was there that such hostility would be cured by permitting the very institution which caused it to go into any territory of the United States? Douglas insisted that slavery restriction was excluded from the power granted Congress by the Constitution "to make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory . . . belonging to the United States." The Free Soilers insisted on the inclusion of slavery restriction in that power. It was a difference of interpretation. How could Douglas rightly reiterate that his view was "constitutional" and his opponents' not? To maintain his position that the Negro was "property," Douglas declared in a speech in Chicago (July 9, 1858) that the Negro must never be given "social or political or other equality" with white men. Yet he acknowledged that the State of Maine had a perfect right to give the Negro the vote. The truth is that Douglas's doctrine raised more difficulties than it settled, and he resented the discovery of those difficulties. I do not question his sincerity. I simply believe that he was wrong.

Although Mr. Milton, in my opinion, has not made out a case for the efficacy of Douglas's proposed doctrine of Popular Sovereignty to prevent the "Needless War," he has given us a most interesting and valuable volume on the fateful decade of the fifties, and by far the most complete portrait of its most distinguished figure.

DAVID SAVILLE MUZZEY

Lloyd George Continues

War Memoirs of David Lloyd George. Volume IV. *1917.* Little, Brown and Company. $4.

HAVING flayed the British admirals in his third volume for their pessimistic obstruction to proposals for dealing with the submarine menace, Lloyd George now takes to task the British high command, especially Haig and Robertson, for their fatuous optimism in undertaking the Flanders offensive in the fall of 1917.

This "futile, fantastic, and dangerous" venture, as Foch correctly characterized the Paaschendaele campaign many weeks beforehand, fills more than a quarter of this fourth volume and is its central theme. And Lloyd George seems to have an even better case against G. H. Q. than against the Admiralty. He shows that while the plan was under discussion much essential information was withheld from himself by Haig and Robertson. He and the rest of the Cabinet were not told that Foch and Pétain disapproved of Haig's plan. They were not informed of the extent of the French mutinies which made the French, after the failure of the Nivelle offensive, decide that they had better avoid any more costly offensives on the western front until the Americans had arrived in force. Concealed also were other essential facts, notably the wet nature of the terrain which would be churned by the artillery preparation into a frightful morass of mud, impassable to man and even more impassable to the tanks which were expected to operate. Had Lloyd George and the Cabinet been fully and frankly informed of all these things, they would never have consented to the "muddy and muddle-headed venture." But Haig and Robertson, safe in G. H. Q. far from the trenches, and encouraged by the adulatory reports of their staff, were so optimistic and confident of hurling back the Germans and winning Ostende and the Belgian coast, that the politicians yielded—with misgivings—to the military experts. The disastrous consequences of the "Campaign of the Mud" were the frightful and futile loss of life, the rejection of an Italian offensive which might have cracked up Austria or at least prevented Caporetto, and the weakening of the morale of the British troops before Ludendorff's terrible drive in the spring of 1918.

In the remainder of his volume Lloyd George treats very interestingly and lucidly of other important aspects of 1917: the creation of the British Air Ministry, the Stockholm conference, labor unrest and electoral reform, the peace moves of Sixte de Bourbon, Kühlmann, and the Pope, the successes in Turkey and the disaster of Caporetto, and the much-needed steps toward securing unified Allied supreme command.

As Lloyd George and M. Poincaré were the dominant political figures in their respective countries, one inevitably compares their memoirs. The contrast is striking. The Frenchman gives a dry, diary-like record, primarily devoted to domestic French politics. Where he touches an international question like the secret Sixte de Bourbon negotiations, he takes it up and drops it a dozen times, following the scattered notes in his journal. Lloyd George, on the other hand, writes with a wide sweep envisaging many lands. He skilfully gathers all he has to say in well-grouped chapters, which may overlap chronologically but which bring to a clear focus the irresistible course of interlocking events. Whether his memoirs, like those of M. Poincaré, will run to ten volumes, it is too early to say. But if they do, and if he keeps up to his present level, he can count on eager readers to the end.

SIDNEY B. FAY

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An Interesting New Poet

Thing of Sorrow. By Elder Olson. The Macmillan Company. $1.50.

ELDER OLSON is an interesting lyric poet chiefly because of his rhythms and his use of sound as texture. By means of a short, rather breathless line and great facility in the use of the caesura, he states over and over again his main theme: that beauty lies in change, in the quick shift of something caught at and lost. This beauty of change is especially a sensuous beauty. The mind considers it but cannot really fathom it; the senses touch it lightly and let it go. Each flickering image is therefore a thing of sorrow. And principally by his rhythms the poet conveys just this mood.

Mr. Olson is a little too facile. He is also, now and then, amazingly imitative. One lyric in this book is almost a replica in thought and even in imagery of one of Archibald MacLeish's best-known lyrics. And in other poems one catches echoes. Mr. Olson's range is not great. He does not achieve Miss Adams's sure leap into the very heart of mystic truth or beauty. He is best when he flutters, as it were, just over the heads of such poets as take their full inspiration from sensuous and earthly beauty and just below the true mystic. He is a mystic in so far as this can be said of any modern thinker who is aware of the Bergsonian philosophy of fluctuating emotions and shifting ideas. Technically Mr. Olson knows what he is doing. His images, his language, his turn of line and phrase show a command of forms. Particularly is he possessed of a fine ear for word sounds. His own line, "Make of no thing but breath," almost exactly defines his art. He lacks fiery or complete intensity. He is now and then a bit literary. He is best when he deals with the exact perceptions of youth. We judge him to be young himself since he is so preoccupied with impermanence and its sorrow. Elder Olson is worth reading and worth watching.

EDA LOU WALTON

Unemployment Insurance

A Program for Unemployment Insurance and Relief in the United States. By Alvin H. Hansen, Merrill G. Murray, Russell A. Stevenson, and Bryce M. Stewart. University of Minnesota Press. $2.50.

THIS book shows a growing clarity of thought among the students of unemployment insurance. A previous volume by the two senior authors had proposed a system of unemployment insurance which carried with it plant and industry reserves instead of a state-wide pool, and which in order to provide forty weeks of benefits imposed a waiting period of no less than eight weeks. In the period which has elapsed the authors have had further time to mull over the whole problem, and they have now essentially come over to the fundamental tenets which certain of us have been expounding for a number of years. Thus they now see that separate plant reserves on the Wisconsin model will result, in a period of depression, in a gross inequality of benefits. For since a depression hits some industries far more severely than others, it will reduce reserves and hence benefits in greatly varying degrees. The authors, therefore, in the present volume favor the state-wide pool with uniformity of benefits which the Ohio Commission advocated and which the American Association for Social Security is fostering.

Secondly, they now see that insurance can only break the first impact of a depression, and following the example of Belgium, Switzerland, Germany, and England, they favor the establishment of a system of state-financed emergency benefits which will supplement unemployment insurance when the standard benefit period is exhausted. The addition of this feature, caring as it does for most of prolonged unemployment, justifies the authors in now reducing their suggested standard benefit period from forty to twenty-six weeks and in shortening the waiting period from eight weeks to four. This plan of limiting the burden which the insurance system as such can carry and then explicitly providing for supplementary aid from the state cannot be too highly commended. It may not be inappropriate, however, to mention that the authors are not, as they seem to suppose, the first in this country to advocate such a plan, since almost precisely the same idea was developed at some length in my "Standards of Unemployment Insurance," and should indeed have been evident to anyone who has watched European developments with any care.

One of the best features of the book is Mr. Hansen's discussion of the problem of transferring funds from periods of prosperity to those of depression. With several others I have for several years stressed the importance of this issue and have urged that it be met (1) by investing approximately nine-tenths of the reserves accumulated during prosperity in government bonds, and at the same time neutralizing a possible credit expansion by placing the remainder in a sterilized hoard of cash, (2) by issuing Federal Reserve or Treasury notes upon the bonds during periods of depression in order to pay benefits and expand purchasing power at such times without being compelled to sell the bonds on a difficult market. Mr. Hansen suggests various possibilities but does not seem to be definite in his preferences.

Taken as a whole, the book is to be commended for its open-mindedness and deserves to be studied by legislators and insurance experts. It is, of course, a personal pleasure for those of us, including I. M. Rubinow and Abraham Epstein, who have advocated these policies for a number of years to find the logic of events bringing to us in increasing numbers such clear-headed students as the authors of this excellent work.

PAUL H. DOUGLAS

The Nineties

The Age of Confidence. By Henry Seidel Canby. Farrar and Rinehart. $2.50.

IN a brilliant historical study, "The Rise of the City," Professor A. M. Schlesinger of Harvard University points out that in the eighties and nineties of the last century the United States trembled between two worlds, one rural and agricultural, the other urban and industrial. In the span of those years the fateful decision was made: an urban-industrial America, one more akin to Europe, triumphed over its former traditional, rural-agricultural self. Yet, infers Dr. Canby in "The Age of Confidence," many individuals have come to think of the nineties as nothing more than "a bad, small-town joke." Such a notion is untenable, of course, as any capable historical work on that period will demonstrate. But if those same skeptics need further evidence of the falsity of that view, they may find it in "The Age of Confidence." These personal essays, which recapture in full tone and rich color life in upper-class Wilmington society in the nineties, through the boyhood and youth of Mr. Canby, confer the feeling that life in those days had an almost spiritual significance.

The closing decade of the nineteenth century in America was an age of confidence, writes Dr. Canby, because "for the last time in living memory, everyone knew exactly what it meant to be an American." Security and confidence were the two dominant chords of those years and were centered in the family and business institutions. All the forces of life—in society, education, religion, politics, even on the more intimate plane of

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sex and marriage—were derived from that stable, unifying nucleus.

> . . . a tradition of decorum, responsibility, and friendliness blended with a stuffy respectability to make society. . . . [But] our society was dying, or rather it was rapidly changing from one consciousness to another. Tradition was fading with dignity, soon our little world was to become more promiscuous, more amusing, and less friendly, much more expensive . . . in a community growing year by year more commercialized, more cutthroat in competition, speculation was beginning to dominate industry.

Breakdown was imminent. Scientific method began to give new color to life. Mothers and fathers no longer feared the hell fire which their parents had instilled into them, and it was only logical that their children, the new generation, should reflect the transformation.

> Quakerism was dead. . . . The fire had gone out of Episcopalianism and Presbyterianism, but they made up in respectability what they had lost in fervor. . . . As for the Baptists and Methodists, they belonged to the plain people, lesser breeds without the law we would have said if Kipling had written the verse in time for us.

The business empire, too, of Wilmington, Delaware, was firmly established. But it had always been a local business community. Thanks to its Quaker background, no predatory captain went forth to conquer America. Even such opposing forces as the blue-coated army of propagandists of Henry George and the notorious Addicks, a captain of industry, were prevented by the populace from using the disproportionate representation of Delaware for their own ends in Congress. Addicks failed "chiefly because he did not know how to buy votes like a gentleman." Big business, however, was not to be stopped. Rockefeller, Gould, Hill, and Carnegie, individualists of unparalleled energy, "were killing individualism for the benefit of their private purses, reducing anarchy to order and chaos to form, in unwitting preparation for a new social order." And almost overnight, when the need for explosives for the World War became more urgent, Delaware, the home of the du Ponts, experienced a tremendous boom and permitted itself to go wild in a mad orgy of speculation "which when it ended had swept away the whole fabric of society as I had known it."

Two factors distinguish Dr. Canby's exceedingly valuable work from the staid, sterile volumes of memoirs which constantly make their way to the reading public. First, he does not employ the narrow, moralistic Quaker vocabulary of the nineteenth century to decipher class differences but uses a modern, full-blown, economic lexicon. Second, he has not written "The Age of Confidence" with a nostalgia for the past. It is dedicated to his sons and is written as though for the whole younger generation today.

ERIC ESTORICK

Shorter Notices

Aleck Maury, Sportsman. By Caroline Gordon. Charles Scribner's Sons. $2.50.

This novel about a Southerner who loved fishing quite as much as he did the Greek and Latin languages, or his wife, is more than a technical achievement to be admired for the manner in which it makes use of a thousand details pertaining to the angler's art. It is also, and even more interestingly, an account of one man's wise and quiet way of life. The author cannot be unaware, though she nowhere insists upon the point, that her hero is possessed of a secret which to most modern persons is unknown—a secret which makes it possible to live with dignity, serenity, and form. The sense of this is communicated by Caroline Gordon through the moderation with which Aleck Maury always speaks, for the book is written in the first person; and if at times this moderation disappoints a reader who has decided to expect spleen or petulance, or the tattered passions which flap in the pages of many a contemporary Georgia or Mississippi fable, such a reader is compensated by the whole vision which he learns to share with Aleck Maury. This is clearly one of the most distinguished and beautiful novels to come out of the South in recent years, and as a document supporting the Southern Idea—if it is that at all—it is worth tons of polemic literature, agrarian, libertarian, unreconstructivist, or what not.

The Yellow Bell: Brief Sketch of the History of Chinese Music. By Chao Mei Pa. Published by the Author at Barberry Hill, Baldwin, Maryland. $1.25.

Authentic data on Chinese music is so hard to find in America that this little book by a Western-trained Chinese musician should be well received. Chao Mei Pa is a recent graduate and laureate of the Royal Conservatory of Music in Brussels. Before that he taught at the University of Shanghai and conducted native choruses in China. He is therefore well equipped to review the story of Chinese music. He has done a fairly good job within prescribed limits, and his brief book is a trustworthy introduction to the subject if not an adequate discussion of it. The yellow bell is the first note of the Chinese musical system, fixed about five thousand years ago. Even at that early date every musical sound bore a poetic and symbolic meaning. The author points out the many misconceptions of the West regarding Chinese music, among them the false appellation of the pentatonic scale as applied to all Chinese music. A well-illustrated chapter deals with Chinese instruments, classical and popular, and points out Japan's instrumental debt to China. Other chapters contain expositions of Chinese music in the theater, folklore, and religion. The author sees a resurgence of a new national school in China, fortified by but not subservient to Western theories of music.

An Introduction to Sex Education. By Winifred V. Richmond. Farrar and Rinehart. $2.50.

This is a simple and satisfactory book meant for use as a text for students in colleges and nursing schools. It treats the subject in both its biological and social aspects, and the presentation is reserved but thorough. In addition there are excellent bibliographical references indicating to teachers and general readers a wide range of fuller studies.

Drama

A Brilliant Comedy

SOME fifteen theatrical offerings descended upon New York during Christmas week. At the present writing I have been able to do my duty by only a few, but so far at least I give first place to the new piece by S. N. Behrman which the Theater Guild has produced at the Golden Theater under the title "Rain from Heaven." It is not exactly a comedy, if by that term one means necessarily a play whose sole purpose is to be amusing or even one in which all the conflicts are resolved through the benign offices of rationality, but Mr. Behrman is still our best comic writer in the sense that no one else can write with quite his combination of intelligence and suavity. No one else so persistently avoids the cliché or so consistently mints his gold anew. The curse of comedy is the tendency of its wit and its "sophistication" to become mere convention, of its "wisdom" to seem something merely borrowed instead of achieved.

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But Mr. Behrman's plays are fresh because even when the point of view is the point of view of all comedy it seems to have been arrived at by the genuine processes of a fresh and active intelligence.

In retrospect one realizes that the theme of the new play—even, indeed, the situation—is surprisingly similar to that of "Biography." Again we have a wise and clever woman brought into conflict with two men each of whom is capable of a certain fanaticism incomprehensible to her, and again it is her perception of a basic incompatibility which separates her from both. Yet "Rain from Heaven" is by no means the same play as "Biography," and it is different not merely because the concrete embodiments of the situation are entirely different but, more importantly, because the problem has become more acute and the issue more pressing. In the earlier play neither the Communist nor the "practical" politician can be taken too seriously, for the simple reason that both are operating in what is nearly a vacuum, and the discords between them are discords of temperament and ideology alone. But in "Rain from Heaven" another sort of crisis is nearer. The scene has been moved to England and to an atmosphere charged with the possibility of proximate conflict. One of the chief male characters is a popular American hero being exploited by his brother in the interests of a vague fascist scheme; the other is a German refugee. Thus one comes face to face with tangible results brought about by the two opposing temperaments; and if the heroine elects again to remain to some degree "above the battle," there is here, as there was not in "Biography," a very real battle to remain above. For this reason the action which begins on the level of pure comedy grows steadily more tense, and the last act, while still managing not to violate comedy's necessary allegiance to common sense, achieves real power in the drunken confession of the financier and the determination of the refugee to return to participate in the conflict he had once thought no business of his.

As in "Biography" there can be no doubt where Mr. Behrman's own sympathies lie. It is safe, I think, to assume that here also the lady speaks for him. But the situation is no longer quite so clear, and the refugee makes out a much better case for himself than either of the men in the earlier play was able to do. While you are trying to understand your enemy, he says, *that enemy will kill you*—unless you kill him first. And to this the lady can only reply sadly that it may be so but that her kind will, nevertheless, not perish utterly; they will somehow survive the storm, and when the storm has passed they will be there ready to play the only part they are fit to play—that of helping to reestablish the only kind of world really worth having.

"Rain from Heaven" is produced and acted with the intelligent skill it merits. Philip Moeller's direction is extraordinarily sensitive, and all the parts are beautifully played. Jane Cowl, especially, has not been seen to such good advantage in years, and John Halliday gives an extremely ingratiating performance in the role of the refugee.

Another notable opening of the week was Katharine Cornell's production of "Romeo and Juliet," which, to begin with, answers successfully the two simple questions which I always ask first of any Shakespearean production: Does it escape the curse of "elocution," and is it or is it not predicated upon the odd Victorian assumption that all except the mightiest of the tragedies are pretty almost to the point of cuteness? Fortunately Miss Cornell has proceeded upon the correct assumption that the persons in "Romeo and Juliet" are Renaissance Italians when they are not Elizabethan men or women, and that the poetry of the play is the poetry of hot impulses amazed at their own almost unbearable intensity. The action proceeds with a headlong swiftness which carries the audience along with it, and pictorially the production is beyond criticism with its characters swaggering in gorgeous raiment against a background sufficiently stylized to suggest how, in this youthful play, the burning reality of Shakespeare's emotion manages to assert itself in a tale not wholly detached from the artificiality of the *conte* upon which it is based. As for Miss Cornell's own very striking performance, I think that it owes its great effectiveness more to the eloquence of her movements and gestures than to her delivery of the lines, which is clear and intelligent without being in itself noteworthy. Brian Aherne is admirable as Mercutio until he comes to his most famous speech, "A plague o' both your houses," when he proceeds to succumb so rapidly to his wounds as to be well-nigh inarticulate. A dying actor should never be so far spent that he cannot recite his lines.

Miss Ina Claire's vehicle, "Ode to Liberty" (Lyceum Theater), is entertaining enough in a mild way without showing her off to the best advantage. Ostensibly a political satire on the revolutionist tamed by luxury and love, it turns out to be only a rather conventional version of the old story of the romantic woman who takes the fugitive under her wing, and the fact that the hero is a Communist instead of (as is more usual) a burglar does not greatly affect the nature of the comedy.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

P. S. Since the above was written, "Accent on Youth" (Plymouth Theater) has revealed itself as a romantic comedy distinguished by its remarkable verve. It will be reviewed next week.

"Kykunkor," the extraordinarily colorful African "opera" which first appeared in New York City last spring, has returned for another engagement at the auditorium on top of the Chanin Building. It was reviewed at length by Lincoln Kirstein in our issue of June 13. It has some remarkable dancing in which Harlem and Africa merge with rather startling ease. As Mr. Kirstein remarked, no one who has a genuine interest in "sudden, occasionally very intense, and never very perfect demonstrations" should fail to see it. The fact that this African demonstration takes place on the fiftieth floor of a skyscraper somehow heightens its effects.

M. M.

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